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The Demonology of the New Testament. I

Author(s): F. C. Conybeare

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## THE DEMONOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

### I.

OF late years the textual criticism of the New Testament has made much progress in this country, and especially in Oxford and Cambridge innumerable manuscripts have been collected and classified ; the great lines along which the tradition has flowed are being ascertained, and even referred to the countries of their origin. The Diatessaron is restored to us, and little by little the external evidence of the Gospels is pushed back deep into the second century. That is one main result gained, and another equally notable is the recognition on all sides that however much inspired by God these writings may be, their transmission to us has at any rate been controlled by the same laws as govern the transmission of any other, and purely human, documents.

But the criticism of the contents of the New Testament has not made equal progress. Isolated thinkers indeed have made attempts to *humanize* the life and personality of Jesus, to show that there is really nothing about the history of the early Church which justifies us in lifting it out of general history and claiming for its documents a right to be tested by other tests of probability than those which we apply to secular narratives. But in the bosom of orthodox Christian sects such efforts have met with little or no response. To be an authority on the history of the sacred text is held to excuse

a scholar's reluctance to grapple with the ideas which are its content and underlie the narrative. Now I believe that we cannot understand these wonderful narratives except in so far as we can reconstruct the *mind* and intellectual habits of those who wrote them, and of those about whom they were written. We must try to breathe the atmosphere which they breathed, even though in working back to it we inhale more than we care to of the dust of ages. No other course is compatible with a real respect for the Christian religion, than to try to understand it as part and parcel of the great process in which man reveals himself to himself—as a great, perhaps, even as a culminating, manifestation of the human spirit. This is rationalism in its true sense. Let us then emulate St. Paul, who wrote thus: “I thank God, I speak with tongues more than you all; howbeit, in the Church I had rather speak five words with my understanding, that I might instruct others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.”

We honour Christianity but cheaply, when we draw a ring-fence around the person of its founder, and employ for the study of his character and actions, as related in the New Testament, methods and canons which we should repudiate in any other field of research.

In this century educated men have so generally abandoned the beliefs in a personal devil and in possession by evil spirits, that the Demonology of the New Testament is a most favourable subject-matter, the which to discuss from a newer and more critical standpoint. Jesus, his disciples, and all the New Testament writers had a profound and vigorous belief in the Devil and in evil spirits: and I venture to outline their opinion as follows.

The origin of evil spirits in a movement of rebellion against God on the part of certain of his angels is assumed in the New Testament as a matter of common knowledge. “I beheld Satan fall as lightning from heaven,” says Jesus in Luke’s Gospel<sup>1</sup>,

<sup>1</sup> Luke x. 18.

addressing the seventy, when they returned to him with joy, because of their discovery that even the devils were subject to them through his name. We have fuller information from Jude, who knew of angels which kept not their first estate, but left their proper habitation<sup>1</sup>; from the author of 2 Peter, who says that God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell<sup>2</sup>. This is all we can glean from the New Testament about their origin. About

Their ac- their present haunts, their activity in regard to  
tivities. mankind, and about the future that awaits them, the New Testament is more explicit. The author of 2 Peter and Jude believed that God reserves them for judgment, bound in dungeons of darkness<sup>3</sup>. The Lord reserves them in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the Great Day<sup>4</sup>. The demons, the ministers of Satan, themselves know what is in store for them, and this is why they cried, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us *before the time*<sup>5</sup>?" And from the same Gospel of Matthew we learn that for the Devil and his angels everlasting fire is prepared, into which the Son of Man at his glorious second coming will cast them along with the cursed among men<sup>6</sup>.

For Satan, the Devil, the adversary, heads a counter-  
They rule kingdom of evil opposed to the kingdom of God,  
the world. and the lost angels are his messengers and instruments<sup>7</sup>. With an absoluteness, hardly less than that of Marcion, the apostles John and Paul insist on the entire subordination of this world to Satan. He is, according to the former, the prince or ruler of this world (*ἄρχων τοῦ κόσμου τούτου*)<sup>8</sup>, in whose casting out the world itself is judged. And Paul calls him outright the *god of this world*. In the legend of the temptation of Jesus, all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them are in Satan's gift.

<sup>1</sup> Jude 6.<sup>2</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 4.<sup>3</sup> 2 Pet. ii. 4.<sup>4</sup> Jude 6.<sup>5</sup> Matt. viii. 29.<sup>6</sup> Matt. xxv. 41.<sup>7</sup> 2 Cor. xii. 7; Matt. ix. 34.<sup>8</sup> John xii. 31; xiv. 30; and xvi. 11.



Since he was ruler and god of this world, it could hardly be otherwise.

Although, according to Peter and Jude, bound in darkness with everlasting chains, the devils and their leader, according to the New Testament writers, nevertheless possess great facilities for moving about. Thus, Paul held not only the Talmudic belief that Satan transforms himself into an angel of light<sup>1</sup>, but also the Persian belief that he is prince of the power of the air<sup>2</sup>. "We wrestle not," he says, "against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers . . . against the wicked spirits in the heavens." Not that they did not also haunt the earth; for Jesus believed that evil spirits prefer to walk through waterless places when they are seeking rest.

As to their composition, we may perhaps infer from Their com-  
position. St. Luke<sup>3</sup> that they could not be handled, nor had flesh and bones, yet that they appeared to the eye. So also Paul<sup>4</sup> expressly denies flesh and blood to the demon adversaries with whom he and his followers wrestled. But though they were thus immaterial, Paul believed that they could be warded off and their evil influences neutralized by so material a screen as the Chalebi or traditional headdress of the Jewish women. For this, as Dean Farrar (*Life of Christ*, Appendix VIII), admits, is the true meaning of Paul's rule, that women should veil themselves in church "because of the angels."

The word *δαιμόνιον* is commonly used in the sense of evil spirits; *δαίμων* is less frequent. *Πνεῦμα* with the Terms for  
evil spirit. epithets "unclean," *ἀκάθαρτον*, or "evil," *πονηρόν*, is very frequent. Sometimes the expression *πνεῦμα δαίμονος* occurs, literally "the blowing of the Demon." For the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. xi. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Eph. ii. 2, and vi. 12.

<sup>3</sup> In Luke xxiv. 37 it is not said that the apostles thought the risen Christ to be an evil spirit, though they were "terrified and affrighted." Anyhow, it was as mere spirits, whether good or bad, that he could not be handled nor presumably eat. *Πνεῦμα* so used in the New Testament is, apart from moral qualities, the same sort of agency as *δαιμόνιον*.

<sup>4</sup> Eph. vi. 12; 1 Cor. xi. 10.

New Testament writers believed that the physical constitution of a spirit, whether holy or impure, was akin to moving vapour; and so, in John xx. 22, the risen Jesus communicates the Holy Ghost to the disciples by *blowing* on them. True it was the Holy Spirit so imparted, and not an unclean spirit; but it must be remarked that, apart from moral ends and considerations, the Holy Spirit gave rise in those whom it inspired just the same physical manifestations as did the unclean spirits.

Let us examine a few passages illustrating this important point. We read in Luke how at the baptism in Jordan the Holy Spirit came down upon Jesus, in bodily form like a dove. Justin, quoting some early form of Gospel, says (*Dialog.* 315 D) that it flew and alighted on him (*ἐπιπῆναι ἐπ' αὐτόν*). And in the Ebionite Gospel, as reported by Epiphanius (*Haer.* xxx. 13), the dove came down and entered actually *into* Jesus (*περιστερᾶς κατελθούσης καὶ εἰσελθούσης εἰς αὐτόν*). That in some early acts of martyrs (e. g. Polycarp's), a dove leaves the saint's body at death and flutters aloft, is proof of the antiquity of this belief that the spirit, in a dove's form, not merely alighted *on* Jesus, but passed *into* him. In precisely similar manner the evil spirits passed from the Gadarene demoniac's body into the bodies of the swine. And the conceptions of spiritual agency which underlie this well-authenticated story must be admitted to belong to a common circle of materialistic ideas with this Ebionite legend of the Holy Spirit. Again, the Holy Spirit *fell* bodily upon those that heard the word (*ἐπέπεσε*)<sup>1</sup>. The spirit of the Lord displayed the same faculty of material constraint, when it caught away (*ἤρπασε*) Philip<sup>2</sup> and, it would seem, transferred him in a miraculous and invisible fashion to Azotus. Similarly in a fragment of the Hebrew Gospel preserved by Jerome, Jesus avers that his mother, the Holy Spirit, caught him up by the hair of his head and lifted him (Comm. in Mich. c. 7, 5-7: in Ezech. xvi.

<sup>1</sup> Acts x. 44.

<sup>2</sup> Acts viii. 39.

13). Perhaps such an opinion also underlies Mark i. 12, where it is related that straightway (after the baptism) the Spirit *drove* (ἐκβάλλει) Jesus forth into the wilderness. The same intrusion on the physical order of things constantly *marks the approach of evil spirits*. Thus the dumb spirit, where-soever it took the man's son, it tare him down, so that he foamed again and gnashed with his teeth, and pined away<sup>1</sup>. And Luke relates of the same spirit that, "bruising" the child, it hardly departed from him.

The Gadarene, similarly, would break his bonds and be driven of the Devil into the wilderness. And the same Gadarene devils drove the swine, in which they were allowed to take refuge, down a steep place into the sea.

Demons, like Holy Spirit, use voice of one possessed.

Lastly, it is illustrative of the power of physical constraint ascribed to demons, that the vocal organs of one possessed were controlled by the demon which had over-mastered him. It was not the man that spake, but the devil within him. "Hold thy peace, and come out of him," said Jesus to the unclean spirit in Mark i. 25; and when the spirit had torn him and *cried with a loud voice*, he came out of him. In the same context<sup>2</sup>, and in Luke<sup>3</sup>, we read that devils came out of many, crying out and saying, "Thou art Christ, the Son of God." But Jesus suffered not the devils to *speak*, because they knew him. In the later age of Clement of Alexandria the demons could not always make themselves understood, for he speaks of a special dialect or language spoken by possessed persons (δαιμονιζόμενοι, Clem. Al. lib. i. 338). In Acts xvi. 16 we read of a girl having a spirit of divination, whose soothsaying brought her masters much gain. Now the Holy Spirit within a man equally took possession of his voice; but whereas the demons spoke articulately, the Holy Spirit seems to have generally expressed itself in a stream of incoherent and unintelligible utterances. This is evidenced by more than one passage in Paul's Epistles. "If I pray in a tongue,"

<sup>1</sup> Mark ix. 18; Luke ix. 39.

<sup>2</sup> Mark i. 34.

<sup>3</sup> Luke iv. 34.

says Paul, "my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful<sup>1</sup>." This gift accordingly was so little for the edification of others, that Paul made the rule, "that if there be no interpreter, then let him that hath this peculiar gift of the Holy Spirit keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God<sup>2</sup>." Not that the utterances of the spirit were ever thus unintelligible; for Jesus bade his disciples to take no thought how or what they should speak, when for his sake they should be brought before governors and kings<sup>3</sup>. "For it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of the father which speaketh in you." Perhaps, however, it is to force language, if we should reckon this as a case of possession by the Holy Spirit, and so as similar to the phenomena dwelt upon by Paul.

With Satan and his demons lies the ultimate responsibility for human sin. Satan is the tempter, the evil one from whom Jesus taught his followers to pray to be delivered. He sows the tares<sup>4</sup> that choke the true seed's growth. He tempted even the Messiah, and he perpetually seeks to ensnare all men. He entered into Judas, and prompted him to betray his master<sup>5</sup>. The Jews who heard not Jesus, had for their father the Devil<sup>6</sup>. "The lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh his own: for he is a liar, the father of it." But though men thus have supernatural enemies who lead them into sin, they will none the less be cast into the furnace of fire, where shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth<sup>7</sup>, as the penalty of having yielded to this domination. Human responsibility is thus assumed in the New Testament, though how it is to be reconciled with the forcible and *ab extra* character of the evil one's assaults upon man is not explained. In records so naïve we could

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 14.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Cor. xiv. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. x. 18, 20.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xiii. 25.

<sup>5</sup> John xiii. 2 and 27.

<sup>6</sup> John viii. 44.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. xiii. 42.

not expect it to be. The same hierarchy of evil spirits is responsible also for death and disease. The inspirer of sin is indirectly the author of death<sup>1</sup>, the last enemy whom the Messiah will destroy. And Satan's demons inflict on those of whose persons they take possession all forms of sickness, mental and bodily.

Let us enumerate the various categories of evil spirits.

There were, firstly, the unclean spirits: such  
 Classifica-  
 tion of  
 Demons of  
 Possession.  
 were the Gadarene devils which drove forth their victim to dwell in the tombs<sup>2</sup>. Their

nature could be discerned from their favourite resorts. No pure spirit would frequent the neighbourhood of dead bodies. And to this day a Jewish priest may not view a corpse. Such unclean demons were held to be the restless souls of wicked men who had died; and this is why they were so often fierce and untameable; in such wise that the victims of their oppression required to be bound with chains. Others were devils of blindness, or of blindness and dumbness together<sup>3</sup>; others were simply dumb, or dumb and deaf together. In some cases the dumb spirit was also a violent one; e.g. in Mark<sup>4</sup> a parent appeals to Jesus, whose son had a dumb spirit. And where-soever he led him he tore him; and the boy foamed, and gnashed with his teeth, and pined away. There were also fever demons, and Luke ascribes the "great fever<sup>5</sup>," from which Simon's wife's mother suffered, to a demon. For Jesus, he says, "stood over her, and *rebuked* the fever; and it left her." Other spirits were merely of weakness or infirmity. So in Luke<sup>6</sup>, we hear of a woman "which had a spirit of infirmity (*ἀσθενείας*) for eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift herself up." And the seven evil spirits of Mary Magdalene were infirmities, or—more correctly—her several infirmities were demons. It is clear that to the mind of Luke the physician, if not in the opinion of Jesus also, fever and rheumatism were cases

<sup>1</sup> Rom. v. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Mark v. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xii. 22.

<sup>4</sup> Mark ix. 17; Luke ix. 39.

<sup>5</sup> Luke iv. 38, 39.

<sup>6</sup> Luke xiii. 11.

of possession. The two first synoptists, however, especially Matthew, tend to confine possession to madness. Indeed, Matthew<sup>1</sup> expressly identifies epilepsy or lunacy with possession. Σεληνιάζεται καὶ κακῶς πάσχει, says the father kneeling before Jesus, who forthwith "rebuked the devil." Peter<sup>2</sup> believed that all those whom Jesus healed were "oppressed of the Devil."

There was no limit to the number of demons that could possess one and the same man. Thus the lunatic of Gadara had so many devils within him that they declared their name to be legion<sup>3</sup>; for devils had their own names, and Jesus was careful to ask what it was. It was of common occurrence for one person to be possessed by several devils at once; and so we read of the seven devils or evil spirits which Jesus cast out of Mary Magdalene<sup>4</sup>. And in this context we may note how common it was for devils to go about in sevens. The unclean spirit, when he is gone out of a man, goes back with seven others that he found walking in the waterless places. In Revelations the spirits of God are also seven in antithesis<sup>5</sup>, and seven in number, as we shall see later on, were the characteristic spirits of Belial.

Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, believed in another and fresh mode of demoniac activity, never referred to in the Gospels. The gods of the heathen were devils, i.e. really supernatural beings exercising their powers and knowledge for sinister aims. "The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to *devils*, and not to God," is his emphatic statement<sup>6</sup>. The tendency of this passage is unmistakable, and it is in connexion with it that we must explain the words which come earlier<sup>7</sup> in the same Epistle, that "an idol is nothing in the world." This refers to the wooden or stone images only. The gods and goddesses themselves,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvii. 15.<sup>2</sup> Acts x. 38.<sup>3</sup> Mark v. 9.<sup>4</sup> Luke viii. 2; Mark xvi. 9.<sup>5</sup> Rev. i. 4; Testam. Rub.<sup>6</sup> 1 Cor. x. 20.<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. viii. 4.

which were worshipped through and in these images, were no other than malignant demons. In Revelations<sup>1</sup> we have the same opinion.

Paul's list of the functions of demons is not yet exhausted. For in his first Epistle to Timothy<sup>2</sup> we have recorded yet another mode of the sinister activity of the devils. "In the last times some shall fall away from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of *devils*, through the hypocrisy of men that speak lies." The demons then were responsible not only for sin and disease, but for false doctrine as well.

Let us now consider the relation of Jesus the Messiah to this kingdom of evil. Firstly, he was not alone or singular in his power of casting out devils. Prior to his advent the Jews were not without resources in combating the demons. In Acts<sup>3</sup> we hear of strolling Jews who were exorcists, but who had never heard of the name of Jesus. And in the Epistle to the Ephesians<sup>4</sup>, where we get more than one peep into the demonological beliefs of St. Paul, we hear of "every name that is named," not only in this world, but in that also which is to come—the reference being, of course, to the use in exorcisms of names of angels and patriarchs. In the Gospels<sup>5</sup> also we have an attestation by Jesus himself of the fact that his Jewish contemporaries could, like himself, cast out devils. "If I by Beelzebul cast out devils, by whom do your sons (i. e. Jews in general) cast them out?" But the Messiah claimed to be no common exorcist, and the demons knew him at sight as their appointed destroyer<sup>6</sup>. He came and entered the house of the strong man Satan, and was stronger than he. He took from Satan all the armour in which he trusted; he bound him, and spoiled his house and his goods<sup>7</sup>. He suffered not the devils to speak, because they knew him. With authority

<sup>1</sup> Rev. ix. 20.

<sup>2</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xix. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Eph i. 21.

<sup>5</sup> Luke xi. 19; Matt. xii. 27.

<sup>6</sup> Mark i. 24.

<sup>7</sup> Matt. xii. 29; Luke xi. 21.

he commanded the unclean spirits, and they obeyed him<sup>1</sup>. The unclean spirits, when they saw him, fell down before him<sup>2</sup>, and cried, saying, "Thou art the Son of God." That it was only by the good leave of Jesus that the Gadarene legion even entered the swine, is good evidence of the authority he wielded over their fraternity.

As to the conditions under which and methods by which Jesus cast out devils, we learn the following details from the New Testament.

The Jews declared that he cast them out with the help of Beelzebul, the prince of the devils. Jesus, however, declared that it was with the finger<sup>3</sup> or by the spirit<sup>4</sup> of God that he did it, and argued that the kingdom of God was therefore come unto them. His procedure was usually to rebuke the spirit and peremptorily to order it to come out. "Thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him<sup>5</sup>." And this is the method referred to by Matthew in the verse: "He cast out the spirits *with a word*, and healed all who were sick."

He made no use, therefore, of magical herbs. Sometimes, however, physical contact with the victim was requisite; thus, he simply laid his hands on the woman whom Satan had bound together for eighteen years. The method of peremptory rebuke was not confined to what we should call mental cases, for Jesus rebuked the fever<sup>6</sup>. Yet he seems on the whole to have reserved it for violent demons, and Simon's wife's mother was probably delirious. "Be thou muzzled and depart," was often Jesus' form of rebuke.

This power over devils Jesus delegated to his disciples; and some of the apostles, e. g. Paul, could not only expel devils, but hand over people to the Devil for the destruction of their flesh<sup>7</sup>. Paul himself so delivered the heretics Hymenaeus and Alexander unto Satan<sup>8</sup>, that they might learn not to blaspheme. The Devil or Demon was, it would

<sup>1</sup> Mark i. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Mark iii. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Luke xi. 20.

<sup>4</sup> Matt. xii. 28.

<sup>5</sup> Mark ix. 25.

<sup>6</sup> Luke iv. 39.

<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. v. 5.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Tim. i. 20.



seem, inducted into the body of a person so handed to Satan. But there was still a chance for his spirit to be saved<sup>1</sup>.

"Jesus," we read, "called unto him his twelve disciples, and gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all manner of sickness<sup>2</sup>." In spite of this, we read that they could not expel the violent dumb demon from a lunatic, because of their unbelief<sup>3</sup>. Belief then on the part of the exorcist, and even prayer and fasting, was needful in order to expel this particular kind of demon. According to Mark<sup>4</sup>, belief on the part of the *father* of the lunatic was also a condition of the cure. "If thou canst believe," said Jesus to him, "all things are possible to him that believeth, and straightway the father of the child cried out, Lord, I believe." In the appendix of Mark we read that it was one of the signs which should follow them that believed, that they should cast out devils and speak with tongues<sup>5</sup>. The sick also were to recover when they laid hands on them.

In expelling devils Jesus himself does not seem to have invoked any name, not even his own, though he claimed to do it by the spirit or finger of God. But already during his lifetime we hear of unauthorized persons, who followed not with his disciples<sup>6</sup>, casting out devils in the name of Jesus; and this not without his approval. At a later time, however, the sons of Sceva paid dearly for taking a similar liberty. "They took upon them to call over them which had evil spirit the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth. And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the

<sup>1</sup> Lightfoot, *Horae Hebr.* (vol. I, p. 505), remarks: 'Traditio hominis Satanae gravissima omnium poena erat . . . Primo enim Corpus illud quod Spiritus Sancti habitaculum esse deberet, Satanae Spiritusque immundi habitatio fit: Secundo, hominis membra non aliter aguntur a Daemone, quam si eadem ipse animae instar animaret,' &c.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. x. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. xvii. 19, 20.

<sup>4</sup> Mark ix. 23.

<sup>5</sup> Mark xvi. 17.

<sup>6</sup> Mark ix. 38.

evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them<sup>1</sup>." The disciples themselves were to use the name of Jesus.

Use of name of Jesus. "In my name shall they cast out devils." This power indeed was the first of the signs which were to accompany them that believed<sup>2</sup>. "Behold, I have given you authority over all the power of the enemy," we read in Luke, who, like the author of the appendix of Mark, ranks immunity from snake-bite along with the power over demons. "Lord, even the devils are subject unto us *in thy name*," say the seventy to Jesus, when they returned with joy. "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk!" said Peter to the lame man<sup>3</sup>. "And he took him by the right hand, and raised him up: and immediately his feet and his ankle-bones received strength." And Peter, in the same context, explains the power: "By faith in the name (of Jesus) hath Jesus' name made this man strong."

Recapitulation. Let us now recapitulate the chief demonological ideas which underlie the New Testament.

(1) The world is full of evil demons presided over by Satan. Without flesh or bones, they hover in the air or haunt the earth, especially its waterless places and the neighbourhood of tombs.

(2) They cause in man all sin and disease and death. They are ever tempting man and plotting his ruin. They enter into his body, and there live as a second soul or spirit. They displace his mind and cause madness; or they affect his body and produce disease. To be sick is to have a devil inside one. To be cured is to have it cast out. The exorcist is the physician, and the physician the exorcist. We hear of a fever-demon, of demons of deafness, dumbness, blindness, paralysis. They are, some of them, impure or unclean; some of them only wicked and lying spirits. Wind and waves also are demoniacal agencies<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xix. 14.

<sup>2</sup> Mark xvi. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Acts iii. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Mark iv. 39.

(3) They are, as a rule, invisible, but have their own names, and express themselves through the bodily actions and voice of their victims.

(4) They will pass from one person to another, and from human beings into animals. Such transitions are effected by them with great violence. They rend the person they leave, and drive their new hosts into frenzy and destruction.

(5) The chief mission of the Messiah was to rid mankind of these pests; to dethrone Satan, and overcome disease and death. When this triumph over the demons is effected, the kingdom of God will be established.

(6) The Messiah gave to his twelve disciples and to the seventy, the same authority to cast out demons and carry on the war with Satan which he himself possessed.

(7) Before the advent of the Messiah, the Jews knew names, at the naming of which over the possessed, the demons took to flight. But Jesus of Nazareth authorized his followers to use no name but his own.

(8) As a weapon against demons, the name of Jesus was immensely more effective than any other. So Paul<sup>1</sup> declared that God "highly exalted him, and gave unto him the name which is above every name: that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth."

(9) The demons were expelled by the mere word of mouth, by the peremptory command of Jesus. His followers, however, had to bid them depart "in or by the name of Jesus." For the preposition ἐν, "in," has the Hebrew sense in this phrase of "by means of" or "through."

(10) Faith on the part of the victim and bystanders in the power of Jesus to expel evil spirits was, as a rule, necessary to a cure, and Jesus himself was impeded by any want of such faith in himself. Nevertheless, even in his lifetime, some without believing in him used his name successfully against demons. Faith was therefore not in-

<sup>1</sup> Phil. ii. 10.

dispensable in the exorcist, though a power over demons went with, and was conferred by, faith.

(11) The gods of idolatrous Gentiles are no other than demons. They are real supernatural agencies, but evil ones.

(12) The demons inspire erroneous teachings within the circle of Christian believers.

(13) They haunt even the churches in which the faithful are met for worship, and in the synagogues possessed persons were to be met with.

(14) The demons were angels which rebelled and were cast out of heaven. Christ when he comes to judge the world will condemn them to torments in hell. This the demons knew, and accordingly dreaded the approach of Christ, whom they instantly recognized.

(15) The demons are often found in groups of seven.

(16) Any number of them at once may possess a man.

(17) Meats offered to idols are not to be touched, nor things strangled, the idea being that the blood being the life of the animal is the proper food for devils. Men by partaking of it would be feeding along with demons.

(18) The word "exorcist" already appears in the Acts of the Apostles, but in connexion with Jews only. There is, however, no reason to suppose that the disciples would have disclaimed the name. In Matthew<sup>1</sup> the verb ἐξορκίζω is used, but not in connexion with an evil spirit: "I adjure thee by the living God, to tell us if thou art the Christ, the Son of God." Exorcism of a demon was but a particular case of adjuration. We may say then that the term "exorcism" is already present in the New Testament in the sense in which later church writers use it, which sense is thus defined by Isidore: "Exorcismus est sermo increpationis contra immundum Spiritum in energuminis sive catechumenis factus, per quem ab illis diaboli nequissima virtus et inveterata malitia vel excursio violenta fugetur" (Isidore, *de Divin. Offic.* ii. 20).

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxvi. 63.

Now the question arises, what is the right interpretation of this demonological strain so manifoldly inwoven not only in the historical but also in the epistolary and prophetic books of the New Testament?

(1) Shall we in the spirit of modern enlightenment deny the reality of evil spirits, and declare that the cases which Jesus healed were merely cases of cerebral and bodily disease? If this be admitted, it remains to ask:

(a) Was Jesus aware of the real nature of the evils he cured, and did he merely adopt the popular opinion in conversation and argument as a concession to the ignorance of the people he was among? or (b) was he immersed in the popular, but mistaken and somewhat barbarous, beliefs of his age and country?

(2) Or shall we take quite another view, and hold that there were really demons at work in the time of Jesus, true satanical beings arrayed as an army for the destruction of men's bodies and souls?

And on this other chief alternative position, if it be accepted, it follows to ask:

(a) Was this activity of demons limited to the period of Jesus' ministry? or (b) did it continue after his departure from among us, and does it still go on?

Of the leaders of religious thought within the orthodox church of the present day, some accept the first of our two alternatives, others the second.

Among the former are Dean Milman and Dean Farrar.

The latter writes as follows: "Among the most frequent of his (Jesus') cures were those of the distressing forms of mental and nervous malady which we ascribe to purely natural causes, but which the ancient Jews, like all Orientals, attributed to direct supernatural agency<sup>1</sup>." "The Jews, like most ancient nations,

<sup>1</sup> Farrar, *Life of Christ*, ch. 23.

attributed every result immediately to the action of demons<sup>1</sup>."

This being Farrar's view, it is a pity that he does not further instruct his readers as to whether or no Jesus was "like all Orientals," in being himself imbued with this primitive belief. But Dean Farrar scents the dilemma into which this view might lead him. If Jesus was "like all Orientals" in this respect, how was he the omniscient son of God? If he knew better and only simulated the common belief, what becomes of his honesty? Accordingly Dean Farrar leaves himself a loophole, and writes as follows: "If indeed we could be sure that Jesus directly encouraged or sanctioned in men's mind the belief that the swine were indeed driven wild by the unclean spirits which passed objectively from the body of the Gadarene into the bodies of these dumb beasts, then we could, without hesitation, believe as a literal truth, however incomprehensible, that so it was." "But this," he adds, "by no means follows indisputably from *what we know of the methods of the evangelists*" (Farrar, ch. 23).

But what is the fact? Three evangelists distinctly aver that Jesus did directly encourage and sanction in men's minds such a belief, and they aver it also in a perfectly naïve and straightforward narrative. Is it then the method of the evangelists "to say one thing and mean another?" According to Dean Farrar it is their method.

On the other hand, Canon Gore accepts the second alternative of the reality of demonological possession, both in the age of Jesus and in our own.

He is far from accepting Dean Farrar's position, that the question is one to which there attaches no vital importance. "The question," he writes, "of diabolic agency and temptation is one which really concerns the permanent religious struggle of mankind. . . . It is a matter of profoundly practical religious interest."

<sup>1</sup> Farrar, *Life of Christ*, ch. 17.

With admirable concision Mr. Gore says of Jesus that "he deals with demons with unmistakable seriousness, emphasis, and frequency. He sees Satan behind moral and physical evil." "Our Lord's language," he says, "reaches the level of positive teaching about good, and still more about bad, spirits." He goes on to declare it to be "impossible for Jesus as the incarnate Son of God, yet more as the spiritual teacher of mankind, to teach ignorantly on such a matter or to inculcate false impressions about it, or to connive in regard to it at popular belief and language."

There is yet the third view akin to Mr. Gore's, viz. that demons did exist during the ministry and age of Jesus, but not before or after. And Dean Farrar<sup>1</sup> in a note leaves a corner of his hospitable mind open for the reception, in case of necessity, of this half-view. "I am not prepared to deny that in the dark and desperate age which saw the Redeemer's advent there may have been forms of madness which owed their more immediate manifestation to evil powers." So the writer of the article on Demonology in the last edition of the *Dictionary of the Bible* broaches the view that in the age of Jesus demons really existed and manifested themselves, but only for the nonce, and in order that Jesus and his immediate followers might have them to cast out.

Instead of trying at once to decide between these rival views, it will be best to glance, first, at the subsequent history of demonological belief within the early Church itself; secondly, at the history of the belief outside the pale of Christianity. (1) Among the Jews before the age of Christ. (2) Among the Jews during and after that age. (3) Among the Greeks, the so-called pagans. (4) Among the ancient Assyrians and Persians. (5) Among primitive men and savages. Then we shall have oriented ourselves, and shall be in a position to pronounce upon the merits of the several views of Canon Gore, Dean Farrar, and others.

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Christ*, ch. 23.

Within the Christian Church.

The earliest extra canonical documents of the Church contain little that bears upon our inquiry. The Demons in the early Church. teaching of the twelve apostles has no precepts concerning demons, neither has the first epistle of Clement. Barnabas<sup>1</sup> in the epistle which is ascribed to him, and which cannot have been written much later than 100 A. D., exhorts us to exert ourselves lest the "black one" (ὁ μέλας) should get a chance of creeping into us. Towards the close of his epistle<sup>2</sup>, he says that the path of the "black one" is crooked and full of cursing. The heart full of idolatry, he says elsewhere<sup>3</sup>, is the abode of demons; and he contrasts<sup>4</sup> with the light-bringing angels of God the angels of Satan, who is ruler of this present season of wickedness.

In Ignatius' epistles the references to Satan as the prince of this world are very frequent. His "ancient kingdom" was pulled down when God appeared in the likeness of man<sup>5</sup>. The martyr felt that "the envy of the devil, just because it was unseen by many, waged against him the fiercer war." Of actual possession we have no mention in his pages; but in Smyrneans<sup>6</sup> he says that the demons are bodiless (ἀσώματοι), and he quotes from a lost Gospel the words of the risen Jesus: "Lay hold and handle me, and see that I am not a demon without a body." "And straightway," he adds, "the apostles touched him, and they believed, being joined unto his flesh and blood."

In holding this belief Ignatius moved in the same circle of opinion as St. Luke; but in that he never refers to cases of possession he approximates to St. John, who, again in this respect as in others, is as it were a connecting-link between the Synoptic Gospels and the more philosophic

<sup>1</sup> Ep. iv. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. xx. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. xvi. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. xviii. 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ign. Eph. 17 and 19; Magn. 1; Trall. 4, Rom. 7; Philad. 6; Eph. 19; ibid. Trall. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. Smyrn. 2; ibid. 3.



Judaism of Alexandria, of which Philo is our sole surviving representative. Ignatius wrote before A.D. 120. Perhaps before that year, and certainly not more than ten years later, we have quite a philosophy of possession, not by demons only but by the Holy Spirit as well, in the Shepherd of Hermas.

As in the twelve testaments, so in this writer, even purely moral forms of evil are demons. Thus, evil speaking (*καταλαλιά*) is "a restless demon, never at peace<sup>1</sup>." So "quick-temper" (*ὀξύχολία*) is an evil spirit (*πονηρὸν πνεῦμα*). The *ὀξύχολος* or man who is quick-tempered is "filled with evil spirits; he is unstable in all his acts, and is dragged hither and thither by the evil spirits<sup>2</sup>." In Italy, where Hermas wrote, the passionate and vindictive temper of the inhabitants must have been a great obstacle to the progress of Christian love and charity. Elsewhere<sup>3</sup> Hermas speaks of the angels of wickedness going up into a man's heart, and contrasts the angel of justice, who is *τρυφερός* or soft and subtle—*tenerrimus*, as the old Latin version renders the word. The same epithet is often applied to the Holy Spirit of God. Another evil spirit is Sorrow. Sorrow (*λύπη*) is indeed said to be more evil than any other spirit. Another demon, called Lust (*ἐπιθυμία*), is daughter of the Devil<sup>4</sup>. Nor is Hermas, when he holds such language, impersonating abstract qualities in a merely rhetorical fashion. On the contrary, these passions are vaporous agencies, capable of physical and material action and reaction on each other and on the Holy Spirit, which in its composition resembles them. So it is that in several passages he represents the heart as a vessel (*ἀγγεῖον*), into which the Holy Spirit and the evil spirits may alike enter and dwell<sup>5</sup>. Not one but several evil spirits at once may remain in a man as in a single vessel. The vase in question cannot hold them all, but runs over. And then the Holy Spirit being *τρυφερόν* or very soft, since it is not accustomed to inhabit along

<sup>1</sup> Herm. Mand. ii. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. v. 2, 7.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. v. 1, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. xii. 2, 2.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. v. 1, 2.

with an evil spirit, . . . departs out of such a man and seeks to live with Gentleness and Quiet. Elsewhere, he says, "the Demon of Sorrow squeezes out (*ἐκτρίβει*) the Holy Spirit<sup>1</sup>. But if a man be *μακρόθυμος* or long-suffering, the Holy Spirit, which dwells in him, remains pure, and is not dimmed and obscured by the presence along with it of an evil spirit<sup>2</sup>;" but "dwelling in a broad space it will rejoice and be glad, as will also the vase (of the soul) within which it dwells. . . . But if quick-temper approach, then the Holy Spirit, being soft, is at once pressed for room, and not finding the place clean, seeks to get away out of it. For it is suffocated (*πνίγεται*) by the evil spirit, and has no room to pray and to worship (*λειτουργῆσαι*) the Lord, as it fain would do, for it is polluted by the companionship of quick-temper. Thus, both the spirits are dwelling in the same place; and that man in whom they are doing so, experiences great inconvenience and evil. It is," he goes on to explain, "just as if one poured wormwood upon honey. The Devil and arch-tempter<sup>3</sup> will, however, depart out of a man who is full of faith, because he finds no room to make his way in. Evil spirits<sup>4</sup> are earthly and vacuous; and the reason why a false prophet is dumb, when confronted with a congregation of people filled with the spirit of the deity, is that the earthly spirit which was in him takes to flight and runs away, leaving him dumb and shattered, unable to say anything."

To the use of the name in exorcism we find no express reference in the Shepherd; but he implies it when he says that "the great and glorious name<sup>5</sup> is the only refuge from the great dragon, and no one who does not bear it can enter the kingdom of God." There is no mention of the practice of exorcism. Yet we must not infer that the writer was any stranger to a rite, which it did not suit his literary purposes to refer to.

<sup>1</sup> Herm. Mand. x. 1, 2.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. xii. 5, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. v. 1, 2.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. xi. 17.

<sup>5</sup> Vis. iv. 2, 4; Sim. ix. 12, 1.

The Demonology of Justin Martyr—who wrote nearly  
 Justin within a hundred years of the death of Jesus,  
 Martyr. and whose life may have overlapped that of  
 St. John, is the same as that of the Gospels, only more  
 fully thought out and elaborated. He in fact recites and  
 explains at length conceptions and beliefs which the Gospels  
 simply assume. The demons so-called are, he says<sup>1</sup>, the  
 offspring of the angels who yielded to the embraces of  
 earthly women and begat children. They have enslaved  
 men ever since by magic writings, by fears and threats of  
 penalties, and by teaching them to sacrifice and offer incense  
 and libations, of which they stood in need. But possession  
 is due not only to these demons, but also to the souls of  
 dead people, which, after death, still have consciousness  
 (*αἰσθησις*), and take hold of men and throw them convul-  
 sively about<sup>2</sup>. (Here, then, we have an explanation of why  
 the Gadarene demoniac was driven among the tombs.) The  
 ruler<sup>3</sup> of the evil demons is called Serpent, Satan, and  
 Devil. They appear to men, making epiphanies (*ἐπιφανεῖας*)<sup>4</sup>,  
 and they terrify them into believing that they are gods.  
 Then men build temples and put up statues into which the  
 devils enter to abide. The gods of the heathen accordingly  
 are evil demons, and wield a real supernatural influence  
 over mankind. The demons<sup>5</sup> assume what names they  
 like among their votaries, and by their foul actions go  
 far to justify the fables about themselves to which the  
 heathen give credit. Nor is it only the myths of the heathen  
 which are due to them; for they equally inspire heretical  
 opinions among Christians<sup>6</sup>, in particular those of Simon  
 Magus and Menander<sup>7</sup>. They even try to prevent men  
 from reading the Scriptures which contain the message of  
 salvation. Their one aim in fine<sup>8</sup> is to lead away men from  
 God the Creator and his firstborn son Christ.

And herein Justin discovers the true rationale of perse-

<sup>1</sup> Apol. ii. 44 B.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. i. 65 B.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. i. 71 A.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. i. 55 E.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. ii. 44 C; Ibid. i. 67 D.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. i. 69 D.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 91 B.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. 61 A; ibid. 92 B.

cutions. For it is the demons who instigate rulers to persecute the faithful; driving the said rulers on with irrational passion as with a whip<sup>1</sup>. And this not in the present age alone. For it was they who long ago instigated the Greeks to kill Socrates<sup>2</sup>, charging him falsely with introducing new gods, merely because he dissuaded men from the service of devils.

However in the end these unholy demons will be imprisoned and punished with eternal fire, as Jesus and the prophets have foretold. And even in the present age Christians<sup>3</sup> are not left without relief from the demons, since these are worsted by the name of Jesus Christ, which they, in common with all other principalities and powers<sup>4</sup>, dread more than any other name of the dead. "We call him<sup>5</sup> (Jesus) our helper and redeemer, for at the power of his name even the demons tremble; and to-day when they are exorcised by the name of Jesus Christ, who was crucified under Pontius Pilate, . . . they cower, yield, and are subject; and so it is proved clearly to all that his father gave him so much power as that even the demons were subdued by his name and by the economy of his passion." So, elsewhere<sup>6</sup>, after quoting the text, "I give unto you power to trample on serpents and scorpions and skolopenders and over all power of the enemy" (Luke x. 19), Justin adds: "And we now (*καὶ νῦν*), who believe in Jesus our Lord, crucified under Pontius Pilate, exorcise all the demons and evil spirits and have them in subjection to ourselves. Later in the same dialogue<sup>7</sup> Justin invites the unbelieving Jews to consider the results achieved under their very eyes by the faithful." "For," he declares, "by means of the name of this very Son of God and firstborn of all creation, who was born of a virgin and became passible man, and was under Pontius Pilate crucified and so died, but rose again from the dead and ascended into heaven, any and every demon is conquered and subdued."

<sup>1</sup> Apol. i. 55 D.<sup>2</sup> Ibid. 56 A; Ibid. ii. 48 D.<sup>3</sup> Ibid. ii. 46 D.<sup>4</sup> Dial. 350 B.<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 247 C.<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 301 E.<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 311 B.

Here then we have the full formula of exorcism used by Christians in Justin's day, and we see that it was calculated to fully instruct the demons about the superior being in whose name they were challenged to quit the possessed.

To the Roman Senate, in his second Apology, Justin addresses a like appeal<sup>1</sup>. "Jesus," he says, "became man to save believers and overthrow the Demons." That in the belief of this apologist was the great aim and result of the Saviour's ministry. "And in the present time (*καὶ νῦν*)," he says, "you can learn from what is going on under your eyes. For many of our people, to wit of the Christians, have healed and still heal many possessed by demons both all over the world and in this your city, exorcising them by the name of Jesus Christ who was crucified under Pontius Pilate—and this after all *other* exorcists and charmers and medicine-men have failed to heal them. For we break the power of the demons that possess men and chase them out." And, in arguing with the Jews, Justin declares<sup>2</sup>, that exorcise as they might by every name of kings or of just men or of patriarchs, yet no one of the demons was subject to them as to Christians. He admits, however, in the same context that the demons would probably submit to a Jew, who should exorcise them in the name of the God of Abraham, and God of Isaac, and God of Jacob. We see, then, that Justin still accords to the Jews the power to get rid of demons which Jesus in his days had acknowledged that they possessed.

Justin's conception of the mission of Jesus is thus very simple. He came among men to free them from the rule of demons, and his name is a more powerful weapon than any other to drive them off. For the rest the use of *the Name* among Christians is the same as in the practice of exorcism in general.

Justin represents Samaria and Ephesus in the first half of the second century. Turn we next to Irenaeus, who represents the Christianity of Asia Minor and Gaul in the latter half of the same century. He, like

<sup>1</sup> Apol. ii. 45 A.

<sup>2</sup> Dial. 311 C.

Justin, acknowledges the antiquity and effectiveness of exorcisms other than Christian. By the Invocation, he declares<sup>1</sup>, of the most high and almighty God men were saved before the advent of our Lord from the most wicked spirits, from all demons and from general apostasy. This, not because the demons had *seen* God, but because, as St. James says, they knew that he existed. He testifies that in his day the Jews still routed demons by pronouncing the name of him who made all things (*hac ipsa affatione*). The same writer, in another very striking passage<sup>2</sup>, bears witness to some very extraordinary facts, as follows :

“In his (viz. Jesus’) name his true disciples, having received grace from him, fulfil works of benevolence unto the rest of mankind, according to the several gifts they have each from him received. For some drive out devils lastingly and truly, with the result that often the very persons who have been purged of the evil spirits believe and become members of the church. Others have actually a foreknowledge of the future, and visions and prophetic utterances. Others again heal the sick by the laying on of hands and restore them to health. And ere now, as we said, even the dead have been raised and have remained with us for many years.” “All these works are in the church performed,” this Father goes on to assure us, “by the free and unpurchased grace of God, and not by invocation of angels or incantations or other depraved methods of magic. It is alone needful for the faithful to send up a prayer cleanly, purely, and openly to the Lord, who made all things, and to invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

It is abundantly clear from these passages of Justin and Irenaeus that the same belief in demons and the same methods of exorcising them prevailed both among the Christians and among the Jews, throughout the second century, as were in vogue in the age of Jesus and his disciples. One by one the several

<sup>1</sup> Iren. ii. 4, 6 (Ed. Harvey i. p. 264).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Haer. ii. 49, 3 (Harvey i. p. 375).

characteristics of the New Testament Demonology may be identified and exemplified in the personal beliefs and experiences of Justin and Irenaeus; and whatever reality appertained to the demons expelled by Jesus must be acknowledged to equally belong to those which these Fathers saw driven out.

And here, perhaps, before I pass on to the views of the  
 Acts of earliest Latin Father, Tertullian, it may not be  
 Pilate. out of place to quote the quaint recipe for driving  
 away an evil spirit, which is preserved in the Acts of  
 Pilate or so-called Gospel of Nicodemus. This is a very  
 early document, relating the story of the trial and crucifixion; and was almost certainly in the hands of Tertullian, if not of Justin. Indeed it seems to belong to an age and circle in which the legend of the miraculous birth of Jesus had not as yet arisen. The very account of the first appearance of the risen Jesus to Joseph of Arimathea on the Saturday night must have been written before the four Gospels became canonical, for it is in flagrant contradiction with all of them. Joseph, as a follower of Jesus, had been imprisoned by the Jews late on the Friday night, on the day of the crucifixion. "And about the middle of the next night, after the full Sabbath was expired, I was standing up, he relates, and was praying, when the building in which you confined me was suspended by its four corners, and I saw as it were a flash of light before my eyes. And in terror I fell on the ground. And some one took hold of my hand, and removed me from the spot where I was fallen, and a spray of water was shed over me from head to feet and a smell of myrrh came unto my nostrils. And having wiped my face he kissed me and said to me, 'Fear not, Joseph, open thine eyes and see who it is that speaks to thee.' And I looked up and saw Jesus, and was afraid, for I thought it was a phantasm, and so began to repeat the commandments, and he repeated them along with me. And, as ye are well aware, a phantasm if it meet with any one and hear the commandments flees precipitately."

I believe that a ghost may still be routed by reciting to it the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments. Perhaps this passage of the Acts of Pilate is hardly pertinent to my theme, but I have thought it well to quote it. For it well illustrates the passage in the Gospels according to which the disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea and thought that it was an apparition. It equally well illustrates, while it contradicts, the various apparitions of the risen Christ related in the New Testament. Lastly, it is curiously like Mrs. Besant's account of the nocturnal appearance to her of an Indian Mahatma, who "like all Mahatmas smelt stongly of sandalwood and Eastern spices."

Similar testimony to Justin's is afforded by Tertullian, who died soon after A.D. 220. "We sacrifice," Tertullian. he says<sup>1</sup>, "for the good health of the Emperor, but we do so to our God and his, and in the way God enjoined upon us, to wit with pure prayer. For God, the founder of the Universe, wants no odour of blood of victims. For these are the food of demons (*daemoniorum pabula*). But we not only repudiate demons, but we also overcome and repel them, and day by day we expose them and drive them out of men, as every one well knows."

There is hardly any man who has not a demon in him, says elsewhere<sup>2</sup> the same writer, whose writings in a hundred other passages prove how thoroughly imbued the North African congregations were with the belief in demons, and what an everyday occurrence exorcism was among them.

Those who would realize how large a space of the mental horizon of a Christian of the late second century the belief in demons occupied, cannot do better than read the twenty-second and twenty-third chapters of Tertullian's Apology and parts of the tract of Minucius Felix. The one reflects the opinion of African, the other that of Roman Christians. "If Christ's divinity," declares Tertullian, "is true and real, because the knowledge of it reforms a man's character;

<sup>1</sup> Ad Scap. 69 c (ed. 1675).

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., De Anima, 305 D.



it follows that the divinity which lurks under names and statues of the dead, and gets itself believed divine by certain signs and miracles and oracles, is but a sham divinity. For we admit the existence of spiritual substances (*substantias spiritales*). Nor is the name a new one; since Socrates had a restraining demon within him from childhood, a demon," adds Tertullian, "which doubtless dissuaded him from what was right (*dehortatorium plane a bono*)." Mark here the hostility of the writer to an ancient whom even Justin and Apollonius of Rome felt constrained to reverence, and whom Justin in particular declared to have been inspired by the Word of God. "The poets," continues Tertullian, "knew of demons; and even the untaught vulgar often resorted to the use of the curse or malediction. Plato knew of angels, and the magi asserted the existence both of angels and of demons." We see how in the above Tertullian testifies that the belief in evil spirits was common to Christianity with the more ancient opinions and religions of the world. "In the Holy Scriptures," continues Tertullian, "you can read how out of certain angels corrupted by their own self-will, the still more corrupt race of demons sprang into being." (Here Tertullian refers to the book of Enoch, which he believed to have been really written before the Flood<sup>1</sup>, and to be rightly accepted by Christians as a prophecy of Christ. "The Holy Spirit," he says elsewhere<sup>2</sup>, "foretold all these things through the most ancient prophet Enoch.") "Now the entire activity of these demons is directed to the overthrow of mankind; and that is why they inflict on our body illness and physical calamities, and on our soul sudden and through their violence extraordinary fits of madness (*excessus*). Their peculiar subtilty and thinness (*subtilitas et tenuitas sua*) enables them to assail both body and mind of man; their spiritual powers enable them to do much, to operate mischief with energies unseen and unfelt, save

<sup>1</sup> De Cultu Fem. i. 3 (151 A).

<sup>2</sup> De Idol. xv (95 A).

in their baneful results; as when some hidden blight in the breeze, hurries forward fruit and grain in flower; then nips them in the bud or blasts them in their maturity; or as when they mysteriously contaminate the air we breathe, so that it spreads pestilence among us. With the same obscure contagion, the breath (*adspiratio*) of angels and demons vitiates the mind, and goads it into madness or cruel lusts along with diverse errors; the most prevalent of which is that by which they get the minds of men so enthralled and deluded to believe in your gods, a belief into which they bewitch us in order to obtain the diet which alone suits them (*pabula propria*) of reek and blood, of sacrifices slain in honour of their effigies and images, and (what is a more acceptable banquet to them) to turn mankind aside from reflecting on the true divinity by the deceptions of false divination." "Let me point out," continues Tertullian, "how they produce these results. Every spirit has wings. This is true of angels and demons alike. Therefore they are everywhere in a trice. The whole world is as one spot to them; and they can learn and announce to us with equal ease what is going on, no matter where." Hence the wonders of false divination. "Because we do not know their real nature, we take their quickness for a mark of divinity. Often the demons foretell evils, and themselves wish to seem the authors of the same; for they often have ill-tidings to announce, but never good. They stole the counsels of God from the prophets of old, and even to-day when we read the prophets in church they are eavesdropping. This is how they ape true divinity. And they ingeniously frame their oracles to suit either event, oracles fraught with woe to the Croesuses and Pyrrhuses of old."

Then<sup>1</sup> follows a passage which reveals to us how old are such superstitions as spirit-rapping and table-turning: "The magicians," he says, "call up ghosts (*phantasmata*), and dishonour the souls of those long dead; they smother

<sup>1</sup> Ibid. 23.

young boys to make them gasp out oracles; they play off marvels with the trickery of jugglers; they cause men to dream dreams, since they have to help them the power of the angels, whom they summon, and of the demons, through whose agency both goats and tables (*mensae*) are wont to guess secrets (*divinare*). . . . Since both angels and demons can work the same results as your gods, what," he asks, "becomes of the vaunted superiority of your gods? Are they more than demons, these gods of yours?"

We should note in the above two points, firstly, that Tertullian believed even the angels of God to be at the disposition of magicians. They had to come if properly invoked (*invitati*). Secondly, he believed goats and tables to be really inspired.

The conclusion which Tertullian urges is that there is no real godhead behind the beliefs of pagans, but only devils; and he points in proof thereof to the dominion and power over the ancient gods which Christians had by merely naming Christ, and enumerating to the demons the tortures which Christ the judge would in the end inflict on them. Dreading Christ in God and God in Christ, they render obedience to the servants of God and of Christ. "So it is," he declares, "that they flee from our *touch and our blowing on them* (*de contactu deque afflatu*), overwhelmed by the contemplation and representation of the fire in store for them. Yea, they quit men's bodies at our command before your eyes with bad grace and reluctantly, and blushing with shame of themselves because of your presence."

What a glimpse we have here of the practical Christianity of the second century. The exorcist standing or kneeling over the prostrate form of a demoniac, touching it, blowing on it, as Jesus blew on his disciples, reciting perhaps the while from the book of Enoch the judgments in store for evil spirits, when their hour shall come.

"But enough of words," exclaims Tertullian, "I can give you, if you will, an ocular demonstration that your gods are mere devils under another name. Let any one be

brought forward before your tribunals, who is admittedly driven on by a demon. Let any Christian you like command the evil spirit to speak, and it will at once own that it is really but a demon, though in other places it falsely pretends to be a god. In the same way let there be produced one of those whom you believe to be under the influence of a god (*de Deo pati*), one of those who, by inhaling the fumes of the altars, have conceived the godhead (*numen*), and who are bent double with belching as they pant out their prophecies. Choose your virgin Caelestis who promises rain, or Aesculapius himself. If these do not at once confess to being demons, because they do not dare to lie to a Christian, then cut the throat of that Christian on the spot for his insolence. What test," he asks, "could be more open and conclusive<sup>1</sup>: there would be no room left for suspicion." It would be nice to know whether a pagan judge ever accepted Tertullian's challenge; and if so, what was the result of so memorable a séance.

In the apology of Minucius Felix, entitled Octavius, we have an account of the demons so akin to that of Tertullian, that critics are divided as to whether Felix had read Tertullian or Tertullian Felix. Just as the one reflects Carthaginian opinion in the second century, so the other, Felix, the scene of whose dialogue is laid at Ostia, reflects that of Rome. The origin of all error and depravity is, says Felix (ch. 26), to be traced to the activity of demons, impure spirits who roam around, exiled from heaven and from the strength which heaven gives, by the stains of earth and by their lusts. These spirits, immersed in vices, are borne downwards by the weight of their sins, and have lost the simpleness of their substance (*simplicitatem substantiae*). Ruined natures, they seek to solace themselves by ruining others and alienating men from God—as they themselves are alienated—by spreading among them false religions. These spirits the poets called demons. Socrates

<sup>1</sup> A hundred years later we find St. Athanasius (*de Incarn.* 48, § 15) renewing the challenge.

recognized their existence and had one dwelling within him, at whose beck and call he acted or declined to act. The magicians (*magi*) not only are familiar with demons, but by their means work all their miracles. Ostanes, leader and spokesman of these magicians (or *magi*), who taught truly about God and his angels, represented the demons as beings earthy, vagrant and inimical to mankind (*terrenos, vagos, humanitatis inimicos*). Plato, who esteemed it a difficult business to find God, tells us about angels and demons. In his *Symposium* he attempts to define the nature of demons. Their substance is halfway between mortal and immortal, between body and spirit, concreted of earthy heaviness and heavenly lightness. Of such a substance was Eros or love formed, so that he could glide into human breasts and stir the feelings. These impure spirits, as the magicians and philosophers have shown, lurk under cover of statues and images, and by their afflatus win the authority as it were of present godhead. At the same time they insinuate themselves into priests, as they hang about the fanes. They also at times animate the entrails of the slain victims so that the muscles twitch; they govern the flight of the birds, rule the lots, and fabricate oracles, in which they mix up a little truth with a great deal of falsehood. For they are themselves deceived and deceive others; for they either do not know the pure truth; or, if they do, will not confess it to their own destruction. Thus they weigh men down from heaven and call them away from God to material concerns. They disturb our life, and break up our sleep; and creeping into our bodies—secretly, for they are attenuated spirits—they produce diseases, scare our minds, and distort our limbs, all this in order to drive us to worship them, and to get the reputation of having cured us, when in fact they have only relaxed the limbs they had themselves cramped, because they are glutted with the reek of altars and blood of cattle. Then Felix relates how the demons owned to being demons, when the Christians drove them out of

men's bodies with torments recited and burnings invoked upon them (*tormentis verborum et orationis incendiis*). Saturn himself, and Serapis and Jupiter, and all the other demons worshipped, could be thus overcome by pain and made to declare their true nature. They never lied about their foulness, especially if their worshippers were present. "For when adjured by the only true God they give a shudder of misery in the bodies of the possessed; and either leap forth at once or disappear little by little (*exiliunt statim vel evanescent gradatim*), according as the faith of the victim assists or as the grace of the healer is breathed upon him. So it is that the demons flee from Christians at close quarters, though when they are at a safe distance from their meetings, they assail them *through* the Pagans, into whose inexperienced minds they creep, and without showing themselves sow hatred of the Christians whom they dread. For this they seize upon men's minds and blockade their hearts; so that they begin to hate the Christians before ever they know them, or if they know them are prevented from imitating those whom yet they cannot condemn."

From such passages as these we can judge how firm a hold the older beliefs still had upon the Christians of the first three centuries. All the gods of the Greek and Roman mythology were supernatural and real, only malignant, beings. Still clearer is it that the practice of exorcising demons from the sick was as common in the Roman Church of 200 A. D. as it was in Judaea during the ministry of Jesus. The evil spirits still cried aloud and convulsed their victims, when they were cast out, just as they do in the New Testament. And just as they cried out to Jesus that they knew him for the Son of God, and besought him not to torment them, for their day was not yet come; so they avow to the contemporaries of Tertullian and Minucius Felix their real nature and their dread of the fiery torments in store for them. As St. James had put it in his general epistle: "The devils also believe and shudder" (James ii. 19).

F. C. CONYBEARE.

**Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania**

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Christian Demonology. II

Author(s): F. C. Conybeare

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## CHRISTIAN DEMONOLOGY.

## II.

WE have next to consider the beliefs of Origen, the most philosophical of the Fathers of the Church, who reflects the opinion of the cultivated Alexandrian Church during the first half of the third century.

According to Origen<sup>1</sup>, the problem of the beginning of Origen's evil is so bound up with that of the revolt of views. the Devil and his so-called angels, that it cannot be understood apart therefrom. Without, however, going deeper into the question of first beginnings, Origen is content to state that the Devil was not always the Devil, and that the demons are creatures of God, so far forth as they are in a manner rational beings (*λογικοί τινες*).

That all demons are evil, says Origen<sup>2</sup>, is an opinion Demons held not only by us (i.e. by Christians), but evil. by nearly every one who affirms their existence at all. And as they are all bad, it cannot be said that all things have their law from the Supreme God. For the demons, through their own wickedness and badness, have fallen away from the divine law and follow the law of sin.

These demons have cajoled men into worshipping them, Demons have taken names which their votaries are care- half ful to ascertain ; and they have various powers<sup>3</sup> material. and favourite charms and herbs which they individually prefer, as well as different forms which admit of symbolical portraiture on engraved stones. We see that Origen attributed outward form and also bodies of

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* bk. iv. § 65.<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vii. 69.<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* viii. 61.



a kind to demons: "their body," he says<sup>1</sup>, "is naturally subtile and thin as air (*naturaliter subtile et velut aura tenue*); wherefore many opine them to be incorporeal." In the New Testament, as we saw, demons are held to be without flesh or bones, and so far incorporeal. Nor is Origen really in conflict with this opinion, for his demons are made of the "material spirit" (*ex spiritu materiali*), of which Tertullian<sup>2</sup> had declared all angels—good and bad alike—to consist.

The grossness, says Origen, of many sorts (*παχύτητες*) which they contract from earth<sup>3</sup> and from the lower air. Demons haunt the lower air. myriad evils of earth, weigh down the demons<sup>4</sup> and prevent their rising from the earthly localities, which they have chosen, into the purer and more divine regions of the sky. So far, however, as they do haunt the air<sup>5</sup>, they cause plagues and droughts and bad seasons, and the rough weather in which the poor mariners perish. All such demons are averted by the death of the one just Messiah, an act of self-sacrifice which Origen does not hesitate to parallel from the similar acts of those who of old allowed themselves to be sacrificed to avert plagues or bad harvests or adverse winds. It is these aerial demons also that make revelations to man by means of augury.

On the other hand, many of them are cast down and punished with imprisonment under ground. And of such the hot springs<sup>6</sup> that well up in many places were the tears, according to Celsus, the assailant of Christianity, with whom Origen was not inclined to differ on such a point.

The localities<sup>7</sup> most affected by demons are, says Origen, temples and shrines, where incense is burned and blood offerings made. For the demons are not so immaterial as that they can do without food<sup>8</sup>, and they find it in the fumes and reek and blood

<sup>1</sup> *De Princ.* i. 95 (ed. Redepen).

<sup>2</sup> *C. Marc.*, lib. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *C. Cels.* iii. 36.

<sup>4</sup> *Exh. ad Martyr.* 45.

<sup>5</sup> *C. Cels.* i. 31.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* v. 52.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* vii. 35, 64.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* vii. 56.

of the slaughtered animals<sup>1</sup>. Here note that the Jewish idea of the blood being the life recurs. The blood, says Origen, is separated from the flesh before we eat it, for fear lest demons be nurtured on it along with ourselves.

Things This, he says, is why the Word forbids Christians  
strangled. to eat things strangled. For the blood, he says, is rightly held to be the food of the demons (τροφή δαιμόνων).

The grounds upon which the Clementine *Recognitions* (bk. iv, ch. 18) inculcate fasting and strict abstinence from over-eating are similar. If we over-eat, the demons enter into us with the food which we cannot digest. And when we eat things offered to idols, says the same book, the demon or evil spirit, which by the heathen rites has been put into the food, enters therewith directly into our bodies. Thus the demons batten on the souls of the victims slain, and the gods of the heathen<sup>2</sup> are gluttonous demons (λίχνα δαιμόνια). Thus the slaughter of victims is in itself enough to lure the demons to the heathen temples. But even without that, they can be attracted to a place and *laid*<sup>3</sup> therein by use of certain incantations and black arts (κατακλίσεις δι' ἐπωδῶν καὶ μαγανειῶν).

Unless the demons have the blood and reek of sacrifice to snuff and lick up, they grow weak and torpid  
Why wicked to sacrifice to demons. and impotent for evil<sup>4</sup>. Hence the peculiar wickedness of sacrificing to them, as do apostates in time of persecution. Such renegades give a fillip to the life of the demons that are the unseen foes of mankind, and so commit a worse sin than if they fed and kept brigands and outlaws and other visible enemies of the emperor and of society.

On such grounds Origen explains the enmity of Celsus, the early critic of Christianity, towards the  
Celsus inspired by demons. faith. He was inspired by some hungry demon, whose altar had been forsaken, and who was

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* viii. 30.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 37.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 34 ; vii. 64, 69 ; viii. 61.

<sup>4</sup> *Exh. ad Martyr.* 45.

therefore suffering starvation through the preaching of Christ<sup>1</sup>. The demons, says Origen, equally instigate emperors and senate to persecute<sup>2</sup>, in order to destroy a religion which threatens to starve them out. But every martyr that resists administers a blow to the demons from which they do not recover for a long time. Hence the long intervals between great persecutions. Again, the sorrow displayed by judges when a martyr suffers torture, and their joy when he recants, is not due to human sympathy on their part, but is a reflex of the emotions felt by the demons on such occasions.

Like Justin Martyr, his predecessor, Origen regards the main work of Jesus as having lain in his successful struggle with the demons, who after his advent no more held undisputed sway over mankind<sup>3</sup>. "The voluntary death and self-sacrifice of Jesus, of the one just man for the many, in a mysterious way averts and turns away the activity of the evil demons." And Origen loves to dwell on the exclusiveness, or, as some moderns might put it, the intolerance of the Christian religion. No half-allegiance was allowable. The demons might be and were tolerant of each other's honours and activity; Heracles is not jealous of the cult of Pollux, nor Jupiter of Apollo's; but Jesus aspired to sole empire over men's souls, and so forbade the cult of any god or hero other than himself<sup>4</sup>. And in him, says Origen, the demons recognize their conqueror<sup>5</sup>, in his name an influence with which they cannot cope. Echoing the statement of St. Peter in the Acts, Origen declares that in every cure which he wrought, Jesus destroyed myriads of demons<sup>6</sup>.

Thus an Homeric war is in Origen's mind for ever being waged between God and his angels on the one side, and the Devil and his demons on the other. In this war every man must take a

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* vii. 56.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* viii. 43, 44.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 36.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* i. 31.

<sup>6</sup> *Cp. Acts* x. 38.

side<sup>1</sup>; and if he will only brave the enmity of the demons, he will secure the support and aid of all the powers of good.

From the fact that Christ's mission was primarily to save man from the demons, Origen also derives an argument against Docetism, i. e. the early belief that Jesus was only a man in semblance and not in reality. Christ must have come in the flesh and was no mere appearance, because otherwise he could not have got at the demons, so to speak, on their own ground; for demons<sup>2</sup> are not afraid of the name of a mere phantasm (*φάνσμα*). St. Athanasius (*de Incarn.*, Migne, xxv. p. 140) goes further in the same path of reasoning, and argues that Jesus was crucified rather than decapitated or sawn asunder, because the Ruler of the Power of Evil dwells in the air, and he only that is crucified dies in the air. By so dying *aloft*, the Lord cast down the Devil "like a flash of lightning," purified the air, and so "cleared for us a road by which we may mount to heaven." Just because he came<sup>3</sup> to liberate all who are oppressed by the devil (Acts x. 38), Jesus declared (John xvi. 11) that "now is the prince of this world judged." And Christians, continues Origen, still have a remedy against demons: they can drive them by prayer and lessons (*μαθήματα*) from Holy Scripture, not only out of men's souls, but—and mark this—out of animals as well<sup>4</sup>. For demons often conspire for the ruin of animals as well as of human beings.

The Jews had believed, and Origen hardly disputed this point with them, that circumcision averted the activity of a malign angel or demon. But ever since the advent of Jesus, circumcision had lost this magic efficacy<sup>5</sup>.

It was now the calling out of the name of Jesus<sup>6</sup> along with the recitation of the histories about him, Exorcism through the name. and nothing else, which drove the demons out of men, especially when the reciters recited them

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* viii. 64.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vii. 35.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* viii. 54.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* vii. 67.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* v. 48.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.* i. 6.

honestly and with genuine belief. Such a formula of exorcism we quoted above from Justin, and the constant use of the *name* to exorcise demons in the church of his age is testified to by Origen in no less than six passages in the single work against Celsus. Of these I select the following: "Even still the name of Jesus takes away ecstasies or fits of madness (*ἐκστάσεις*) from the minds

of men, and expels demons, yea, and diseases as well<sup>1</sup>." And this: "The Creator of all things<sup>2</sup> . . . ordained him (Jesus) to deserve

honour not only from such men as desire to be right minded, but also from demons and other unseen powers. Demons and men alike up to the present time display respectively either their fear of the name of Jesus as stronger than themselves, or their reverential acquiescence in his rule as in accordance with their laws."

"For unless Christ's nature and composition (*σύντασις*) had been bestowed on him from God, the demons would never yield to the mere mention of his name, and retire from the victims of their enmity." "There are those," he says in yet another passage<sup>3</sup>, "who in their cures show clearly that they have acquired, through this faith of ours, miraculous powers; for they invoke over those who need to be healed nothing else except the Supreme God and the name of Jesus along with the history of him." Elsewhere he attests<sup>4</sup> that he had with his own eyes seen miracles thus worked by Christians.

We may ask: Why had the name of Jesus such effect?

Why had certain other titles the same, in particular that of "God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob," at the mention of which, says Origen (in agreement with Justin), the demons are cowed and overcome? The reason assigned by Origen is sufficiently simple. The unseen powers, he declares, *must* come when they are called—whether it be God or Christ

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* i. 67.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 36.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 24.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* ii. 8; i. 2, 26; vii. 4; viii. 58.

or Demon that is invoked—provided only they be properly addressed and by their true names, and in a tongue which they are familiar with and understand.

Certain sounds and syllables, says Origen<sup>1</sup>, and certain titles pronounced with aspiration or without, pronounced long or short, bring at once to us, by some incomprehensible nature inherent in them, the persons summoned. For names are not conventionally (θέσει) given to the things they denote, but belong to them by a natural and highly mysterious affinity. It is in accordance with a certain ineffable analogy (ἀπόρρητος λόγος) that the names of Sabaoth or Adonai have been assigned to God<sup>2</sup>; or those of Michael, Gabriel, and Raphael to certain angels. “The same abstruse philosophy of names is,” adds Origen, “respected and observed by our Jesus also, whose name has ere now been plainly seen to drive thousands of demons out of souls and bodies by its energy and inner influence working upon those from whom the devils were driven.” We see most clearly from such a passage as this, that the use of the name of Jesus Christ in prayers and exorcisms was in Origen’s regard the same in principle as the use of any other name in Jewish and pagan formulae. The sole difference was that devils were more afraid of Christ, their future judge, than they were of Jupiter or Solomon.

It is therefore sinful, argues Origen, to suppose with Celsus that Zeus is but another name for the Highest God<sup>3</sup>. For it is right to call God by no other names than those of Sabaoth, Adonai, Saddai, or, again, by the title of God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, by which Moses, the servant of God and the prophets, and our Lord knew Him. Zeus is merely the title of a greedy and incompetent demon, and to apply it to God would be the direst blasphemy. In spite of such purism, however, Origen<sup>4</sup> would allow inhabitants of the Scythian desert and other barbarians to call

Each Power  
to be called  
by its right  
name,

<sup>1</sup> *Exh. ad Martyr.* § 46.

<sup>2</sup> *C. Cels.* i. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Exh. ad Martyr.* § 46.

<sup>4</sup> *C. Cels.* v. 46.

God by the names, e.g. Pappaeus, assigned in their vernaculars, just because they mean well and know no better.

Nor, he insists, in invoking God is it well to call him by a paraphrase. For example, in any incantation, no matter whose, the name Sabaoth followed by the connatural train of words (*συμφυοὺς εἰρημοῦ*), and with such titles added as skilful exorcists are acquainted with, will effect a result; but if, instead of Sabaoth, we substitute the Greek paraphrase of the Hebrew word, and say, "Lord of powers," then no effect will be produced. And the same rule, continues Origen<sup>1</sup>, applies to demons as to the Most High God. If a demon or a man has a Greek name from birth, we can only cause him to do or suffer something by adhering to that name. We must not translate it into Egyptian or Latin. Conversely in incantations, you must not translate a Latin name into Greek. If you do, it becomes nerveless and impotent. Hence a general rule<sup>2</sup>: every demon must be addressed by his local name; and some have Egyptian, and others Persian designations. And these names have, says Origen, a certain potency, if pronounced with the string of titles connatural to them (*λεγόμενα μετὰ τινος τοῦ συμφυοῦς αὐτοῖς εἰρημοῦ*)<sup>3</sup>, as the wise men of the Egyptians, or the Brahmans of India or Samanaei, well know how to do. For so-called magic, says Origen, is far from being the unsubstantial thing which Epicurean and Aristotelian sceptics imagine it to be. On the contrary, it is a very substantial reality, and has mysterious doctrines (*λόγους*) known to very few. After adducing such arguments as these from the Fathers of the Church, I hope I shall not be accused of irreverence, when later on I assimilate the use of the name of Jesus Christ to ancient magic in general. Origen is not the only Father who so assimilates it. I merely follow the example set by them.

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* v. 45.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* i. 25.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* i. 24.

Just because proper names are not accidental, and because the qualities and peculiarities of sounds. quite apart from their meanings, have in themselves a certain potency in regard to one reality or another, it is plainly wrong, argues Origen<sup>1</sup>, for Christians to call God Zeus, or by any other foreign name. And they are ready to die rather than do so. For to do so, would only gratify the demons who are longing to be called by a more exalted name than really belongs to them, just because it gratifies their ambition.

Origen further tells us<sup>2</sup>, that in his day even private and unprofessional persons (*ιδιωται*) could expel demons from men's souls and bodies by mere prayer and simple kinds of adjurations, without recourse to wizardry or magic, or any use of drugs and potions. The stress here laid on the fact that *unprofessional* exorcism was so successful, implies that there was already a recognized order of exorcists in the Christian Church, though we only read of them for the first time in the Canons of the Council of Antioch<sup>3</sup>. But, as we saw above, Justin Martyr testifies<sup>4</sup> to their existence both among the pagans and Jews as a regular order. Such a regular order of exorcists must of necessity soon have arisen also in the Church, since in baptism the evil spirits in a catechumen had to be driven out before the Holy Spirit could enter into him; in accordance with what we learned from Hermas, there is no room in the same vessel for both at once. Thus Cyril<sup>5</sup> of Jerusalem says that without exorcism the soul cannot be purged (*ἀνευ ἐπορκισμοῦ οὐ δύναται καθαρθῆναι ψυχῇ*). And the terms *Purgari et Baptizari* are conjoined in the Sentent. Episcop. of the Council of Carthage, A.D. 256<sup>6</sup>.

In the Apostolic Constitutions<sup>7</sup> it is decreed that the exorcists be not ordained, unless their services are wanted as bishop, presbyter, or deacon. The reason given is that

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* i. 25.<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* vii. 4.<sup>3</sup> *Can.* 10, *Conc. An.*<sup>4</sup> Justin M., *Apol.* ii. 6, p. 45; *Dial.* 311 D.<sup>5</sup> *Procat.* 9.<sup>6</sup> *Cypr. Ed. Hartl.* p. 441.<sup>7</sup> *Const. Apost.* 8, *Can.* 26.



the power of expelling demons and the χάρισμα, or grace of healings, are declared by the revelation of God, and depend on the visitation of the Holy Spirit. Septimius<sup>1</sup> assails certain heretical women for daring to exorcise. In Origen's age the professional exorcists were fairly numerous in the Roman church, and seem to have formed a regular grade. For Eusebius<sup>2</sup> records that in the middle of the third century (A. D. 251) there were in Rome fifty-two exorcists with readers and doorkeepers, to forty-six presbyters. In all the Christian churches we find regular rituals of exorcism, to be used as occasion requires. In the Eastern churches, and more rarely in the Latin communion, they are still in use.

There used to be a ritual of exorcism in the English Prayer-book, but for many generations it has  
Exorcism in English Church. ceased to be printed in it. So thoroughly has the old belief in possession by demons faded out of the minds of our cultivated classes. We must go to our ritualistic priests, or to the wildest and most superstitious parts of Ireland, if we would still find in existence a belief upon which, nevertheless, almost more than on any other, early Christianity hinged, and which, though forgotten, still underlies the rite of Baptism.

The idea that sickness is due to Satan is also traceable in the Order for the Visitation of the Sick, in which the minister prays to God to defend the sick "from the danger of the enemy." But in the rest of this very beautiful and touching service the sufferer is assured that his sickness is God's visitation.

The exorcism was effected in the early Church not only by adjuration and use of the name along with short recitals of the history of Jesus, but the touch and afflatus, or on-breathing, of the exorcist was necessary. The Arabic Canons of Hippolytus (Canon 19, § 6, and Canon 29) further enjoin the exorcist, after the adjurations, to sign with the cross the breast, forehead, ears, and mouth of the

<sup>1</sup> *De Praescr. Haeret.* cap. 41.

<sup>2</sup> *H. E.* vi. 43.

person afflicted. Lactantius (*Div. Inst.* iv. 27) refers to the use of the *signum passionis* or cross in exorcism. The patient lay flat on the ground (Origen, *Hom. in Matt.* 13, § 7). In the *Directorium Anglicanum*, a manual for the use of the English Church, we find a form given from the Exeter pontifical for the exorcism of water, as follows: "I exorcise thee, creature of water, in the name of God the Father Almighty, and in the name of Jesus Christ His Son our Lord, and in the virtue of the Holy Ghost, to become water exorcised, to chase away all the power of the enemy, and to be able to uproot and overthrow the enemy himself and his apostate angels; by the virtue of the same Lord Jesus Christ, who will come to judge the quick and the dead, and the world by fire." Salt is similarly exorcised, and so also are even flowers before being used to decorate the Church, as witness the following, which, I am told, is commonly used on Palm Sunday in those English Churches of which the hierophants desire to re-introduce in England the superstitions of a bygone age. It is, with unconscious irony, called a formula of "Blessing of Flowers and Branches," and runs as follows: "I exorcise thee, creature of flowers and branches, in the name of God the Father Almighty, in the name of Jesus Christ His Son our Lord, and in the power of the Holy Ghost. Henceforth, thou whole might of the adversary, thou whole inroad of evil spirits, be rooted up and pulled out from these creatures of flowers and branches, that thou pursue not with thy wiles the footsteps of those hastening to attain unto the grace of God. Through Him, who shall come to judge the quick and the dead, the world by fire" (p. 327 of the *Directorium Anglicanum*, edited by F. G. Lee, 1866).

Before I pass to the evidences of demonological belief contained in Jewish literature, I venture to quote a description of demoniac possession such as was still to be witnessed in Jerusalem in the fourth century from Cyril, who was bishop and head of the

Christian community there from A.D. 351-380. He is distinguishing the several sorts of spirit, and how they should be called<sup>1</sup>. "If you speak of spirit in connexion with the human soul, you add 'of man,' and say, spirit (*pneuma*) of man. If you are speaking of the wind, you say, spirit of the storm (*pneuma kataigidos*). If of sin, you say, spirit of adultery. If you speak of the demon, you say, an impure spirit; that we may know what is in each case being spoken of, and not suppose that the Holy Spirit is in case. For the word spirit (*pneuma*) is a neutral one, and everything which has not a solid body is in general called spirit. And because the demons have not such bodies, they are called spirits."

"And," he continues, "there is a vast difference. For the unclean spirit, when it comes upon the soul of a man (and from such a visitation may the Lord preserve every soul of those that hear me, and of those who are absent), it comes like a blood-thirsty wolf ready to devour the lamb. Most fierce is its presence, overwhelming the sensation. The intellect is lost in darkness; and its assault is brutal, is the violent robbery of what belongs to another. For it takes forcible possession of, and uses as its own, another's body, and another's organ (? of speech). It throws down him who is standing up; for it is nearly allied to him that fell from heaven. It distorts the tongue. It twists awry the lips. Foam replaces language. Darkness covers the man. The eye is fixt wide open, and through it looks not forth the soul; and the wretched man throbs and trembles before death comes. Truly are the demons the enemies of men, treating them shamefully and pitilessly."

This is a powerful though distressing description of epileptic madness; and I only quote it in order to drive home my chief point, namely, that the demonological beliefs of the New Testament are absolutely the same as those of prior and subsequent ages. In Cyril's remarks preliminary to this description, we even have a mention

<sup>1</sup> Cyr. Al. c. I. xvi. 15.

of the spirit of the whirlwind which Jesus encountered on the Lake of Gennesaret, and, with the characteristic rebuke, "Be thou muzzled, be quiet," subdued, saving his disciples from a watery grave.

Not less interesting are Cyril's references to Exorcism.

Cyril on "Man," he writes just below<sup>1</sup>, "as long as he carries about a body, has to struggle with many most fierce demons. And often the demon, who could not be restrained by many using iron manacles, is subdued by the words of prayer, by the power inherent in the Holy Spirit; and the simple in-blowing (*emphysema*) of the exorcist (*eporkizôn*) becomes a fire to the unseen foe."

Here once more we see that it was of fire that the demons were most afraid; and this was a belief extending far beyond Christian circles, as we shall see from the accounts preserved of the exorcismal triumphs of Apollonius of Tyana. In another passage<sup>2</sup>, to which I have already referred, Cyril describes the use of *breathing* on the possessed, and compares the exorcist to a gold refiner. The human body is a crucible, the human soul is the gold hidden beneath the demonic dross. The breath of the exorcist strikes in terror by means of the Holy Spirit, and fans the smouldering spark of the soul into a flame. At once the hostile demon flees; but salvation remains behind along with hope of immortal life.

Such a passage as this agrees with Tertullian's references to *tactus et afflatus*, already cited, and no less with the rite of Baptism as practised in the Roman Church. It is clear that the *breath* of the exorcist was conceived to be itself the Holy Spirit, and not a mere symbol thereof. So also Jesus blew on his disciples and gave them the Holy Ghost.

In another passage<sup>3</sup> Cyril describes the use of the exorcised oil (*elaion eporkiston*). It went immediately before the descent into the pool or piscina. The catechumens were first stripped naked before all, "like Adam in Paradise," females no less

<sup>1</sup> Cyr. Al. c. I. xvi. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. Procat. 9.

<sup>3</sup> C. M. 2, 3.

than males; they were then anointed with the exorcised oil from the crown of the head to the soles of the feet. The real purport of the anointing was to block up all pores and inlets of the body against the return of the evil spirits. Wherefore on a great occasion, when among Gentiles, St. Thomas, according to his early but gnostic acts (§ 5), anointed the top of his head, his nostrils, his ears, teeth, and the region of his heart. "In the same way," writes Cyril, "as the in-blowings of the saints and the invocation of the name of God burn up like a most powerful flame and rout the demons; so this exorcised oil also, through the invocation of God and prayer, acquires such a power, as not only to burn up and cleanse out the traces of sin, but also to chase away all the unseen powers of the Evil One."

And these powers do not seem to have been always invisible; for in old Christian representations of exorcisms the devils are pictured in their flight as little black manikins making off<sup>1</sup>. Demons pictured as manikins. Why they should have been so small, I do not know; probably, like the soul at death, they were supposed to come out by the mouth of the possessed. Into the question of the representation of demons in later Christian art, I need not enter.

### *Evidence of Jewish Literature.*

The Gospels are a tale told with touching simplicity of a man who went about doing good, who felt it his mission to heal the sick, to comfort the repentant sinner, and himself to suffer as an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of mankind. We have the records of many famous saints, but not of many who were quite free from pride and respect of persons. Many have affected a contempt for riches. Necessity of reading N.T. in a critical spirit.

<sup>1</sup> See woodcut in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, art. Exorcism.

and fame, even for the shams of priests and the pedantry of divines. But few have really put away all this; and I can think of no other teacher, except perhaps the Buddha, who within a few years of his death was honoured with the title of the *sinless* servant of God, not only by personal followers, but by many who had never known him except in visions.

Such a record demands our reverence. But it is asked of us by the churches and orthodox sects, that in reading it we should also suppress our critical faculty. Not only are we told that we must believe in every incident narrated in the New Testament, but we are further to accept, without question, such dogmatic interpretations of the text as have been, long centuries ago, elaborated by the Catholic Church. The New Testament is thus put on a pedestal and invested with a dignity and sacro-sanctity which is not even claimed for the Old. For our leading divines of the present day, our Gores and our Farrars, our Swetes and our Temples, are willing to walk some way along the path of a more rational interpretation of the Old Testament; but from a similar treatment of the New they recoil. They cleave to the miraculous birth of Jesus, even when an ancient form of gospel turns up which clinches the many proofs of fabulous character which the Gospels already afforded. Jesus still walks upon the waters, raises the dead, converses on a mountain top with Moses and Elias, and feeds 5,000 hungry men upon nothing; he still issues alive and with restored flesh and blood from the tomb, and, with all his human and earthly appurtenances intact, ascends into heaven. No detail of this phantasmagoria is to be touched. They imagine that all doubts are silenced, because they have pushed back the date of the synoptic Gospels and of Acts, or rather of the previous materials used up in them, to within half a century of the death of Jesus. For they cannot realize that the general psychological conditions of orientals, the ecstasy of men who believed that the end

of the world was close at hand, the necessities of the messianic argument, the uncertainties of a tradition admittedly oral at first, the atmosphere of pagan myth breathed from birth by the Gentile converts, would explain an accretion in fifty years of fable round so great a personality many times as thick as that which actually obscures it.

But if one circumstance more than another reinforces the uncritical attitude of the orthodox sects, it is the Birth of  
early Jewish  
apostolic  
records. apparent isolation of the New Testament narratives. Here is a body of literature which suddenly, and without any congeners, makes its appearance. Allied writings neither precede and herald it, nor yet follow it so closely as to assist us in clearing up its problems by supplying analogies.

It is certain that in the second century, when the canon of the New Testament was drawn up and imposed upon itself by the Church, there were still in existence writings of the earlier Jewish and of the apostolic age which the later Church either destroyed or allowed to perish as hostile to its later dogmatic developments, which would yet be invaluable to us now. Indeed, The Shepherd of Hermas, and The Didache, and The Epistle of Barnabas, and the Gospel of Peter have been restored to us. Yet, after all, the New Testament is not quite so isolated for us in respect of what went before it as is supposed. And in the apocryphs ascribed to Enoch we have Jewish books, unquestionably anterior to Christ, which bring before us at least some of the conditions of belief and expectation which preceded and rendered possible the ministry of Jesus. These apocryphs have only come down to us chiefly in Ethiopic or in Old Slavonic. Dillmann first translated the Ethiopic text in Germany; and lately Mr. Charles has given us in two volumes a scholarly English edition of the Enoch literature, which, according to Tertullian, writing as late as 200 A.D., "rang of Christ" (*Christum sonat*).

A *locus classicus* for the origin of the demons is found in a section of the book of Enoch<sup>1</sup>, which Enoch on giants and demons. Mr. Charles ascribes to a period before 179 B.C. The passage is also preserved in its original Greek in Syncellus and in the Bouriant Papyrus lately dug up in Egypt, as well as in the Ethiopic version. This Greek text of Enoch, it must be remembered, was in turn a translation of a lost Hebrew book. From it we learn that the strong or evil spirits, which have their habitation on earth, are the giants that were begotten of mortal women by the watchers of heaven, the angels. They were thus born at once of spirits and of flesh." "Wicked spirits," the apocryph proceeds, "came out of the body of them (i.e. of the women), for they were generated out of human beings; and from the holy watchers flows the beginning of their creation and their primal foundation. The spirits of heaven—in the heaven is their dwelling; and the spirits begotten upon earth—in the earth shall be their dwelling. And the spirits of the giants will devour, oppress, destroy, assault, do battle, and cast upon the earth and cause convulsions. They will eat nothing, but fast and thirst, and cause visions and cause offences. And these spirits will rise up against the children of men and against the women, because they have proceeded from them." Here in a few lines is portrayed, just as in the Gospels, the activity of the demons. They are lost angels. They haunt the earth's surface. They assail men's bodies and convulse them, they cause visions and otherwise oppress mankind.

This vindictive war of demons is, so we learn<sup>2</sup>, to continue until the day of consummation, until The impending judgment of demons. the great judgment, when the watchers and the godless will receive condign punishment. This belief also, as we saw, is present in the Gospels, in which the demons cry out to Jesus "Art thou come hither to torment us *before our time*?"

<sup>1</sup> Enoch, ch. xv.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ch. xvi. i.



In a later chapter<sup>1</sup> of Enoch we are told that the evil spirits, assuming many different forms, shall defile men and lead them astray to sacrifice to demons, as if to gods, until the day of the great judgment, in which they will be judged and ended, while wives of these angels which transgressed will be turned into sirens. Here the beliefs of Paul and John and Jesus are anticipated and presented as the popular beliefs of the Jews nearly two centuries earlier.

In a later chapter<sup>2</sup> of the same apocryph we read, just as we have read in the epistles of Peter and Jude, of the iron chains prepared for the hosts of angels, when they are cast down into the abyss of condemnation, as the Lord of spirits commanded. We read also of the fiery furnace into which Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Fanuel will cast them, that the Lord of spirits may take vengeance on them for their unrighteousness in subjecting themselves to Satan and leading astray the dwellers upon earth. Mr. Charles points out in his general introduction<sup>3</sup> how many features of the New Testament demonology first appear in Enoch. "The functions of the satans in Enoch," he says, "are three-fold: they tempted to evil, lxix. 4, 6; they accused the fallen, iv. 6, 7; they punished the condemned as angels of punishment, liii. 3; lvi. 1."

The Testaments of the patriarchs is an apocryph which has been wrongly ascribed to a church writer of the early second century. It is in fact, like Enoch, a Greek translation of a lost Jewish work; and, though later than Enoch, it is yet—with the exception of a few interpolations—in the main a pre-Christian document. In the Testament of Reuben we hear of the seven spirits given from Beliar against mankind, to wit, the spirits of life, seeing, hearing, smell, of talking, taste, and of the philoprogenitive impulses. To this group is added, as it were by an after-thought, an eighth, the spirit of sleep. Then the writer enumerates the members of another group of seven, namely, of fornication,

<sup>1</sup> Enoch, ch. xix. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. ch. liii. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 53.

of gluttony, of combativeness, of flattery and sorcery, of pride, falsehood, and injustice. We see how fond the demons were of the number seven. In the magic rituals of ancient Assyria, the demons commonly go about in groups of seven, as Lenormant has noticed in his work on Assyria (*Ancienne Histoire*, liv. 6). The Prince of Deceit, we read in the testament of Symeon<sup>1</sup>, sent a spirit of envy and blinded the patriarch, till God sent an angel and rescued him. And fasting is recommended, as it was by Jesus, along with fear of God as a means of overcoming the demons of envy. For if a man flees to the Lord, the evil spirit runs away from him and his mind is *lightened*. *Lightened*, for, as we already know from Origen, the evil spirits were heavy, and weighed down with the dross of earth. Nor do the Testaments disagree with the New Testament as to the fate which will overtake the evil spirits: "When the Lord, the great God of Israel, shall appear on earth as man and save in his person Adam, then shall all the spirits of error be trodden underfoot, and men shall rule over the evil spirits." "Hate ye," says Aser<sup>2</sup>, "the spirits of error which contend against man."

And we also have in the Testaments some curious beliefs about the behaviour to us after death of the demons whom we encouraged in life: "We must rest in the Lord, returning ourselves unto him (in death). Because the ends of men (when they die) show if they were just, and if they distinguished the angels of the Lord and of Satan. For if the soul departs troubled, it is being tormented by the evil spirit of which it was the slave on earth in lusts and evil works."

This particular belief was very popular among the early Christians, nor was it peculiar to them. For Origen declares<sup>3</sup> that he in common with Jews, Greeks, and barbarians believed that the pure soul, which is not weighted with the leaden weights of sin, soars at death aloft to the regions tenanted by the purer and ethereal

<sup>1</sup> *Test. Sym.* 2.<sup>2</sup> *Test. Aser.* 6.<sup>3</sup> *C. Cels.* vii. 5.

bodies, leaving the dense bodies of earth and the pollutions they contain. But the bad soul is dragged down to earth, and, without being able even to take breath, is carried and rolled about on it; one evil soul towards the tombs, where are actually seen the phantasms of shadowy souls; another, simply and solely around and about the earth. How many such spirits, he asks, must we not suppose to exist, that have been bound, so to speak, whole aeons long either by certain sorceries or by their own wickedness to houses and particular spots.

We must now turn to the Alexandrine Jew Philo, a contemporary of Jesus, and our sole surviving representative of that great school of philosophic Judaism which blended old Greek speculations with Semitic monotheism. In his book "Upon Giants," Philo comments on the text of Genesis: "But the angels of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and took to themselves wives of all whom they chose<sup>1</sup>," as follows: "Those beings whom other philosophers call demons, Moses is wont to term angels; and they are souls flying about in the air. And let no one suppose that the statement is a myth; for it must needs be that the entire Cosmos is throughout instinct with soul (*ἐψυχῶσθαι*), and each of its primal and elementary parts contains its peculiar and appropriate living beings, to wit: the earth, animals of the dry land; the sea and rivers, those which live in water; fire, those begotten of fire, a kind which is said to exist specially in Macedonia; and heaven, the stars. For the stars are souls, through and through stainless and divine; for which reason they move in a circle with the movement most akin to reason. For each of them is reason pure and unalloyed.

"It must needs be then," he continues, "that the air too is replete with living beings, though these are invisible to us, just as the self is not visible to the senses. Of these souls," he continues in

The demons  
fill the  
world.

<sup>1</sup> Gen. vi. 2.

the next section, "some descend into bodies, but others have never deigned to associate themselves with any portion of earth; and the latter, hallowed and devoted to his worship, their Father and Creator is wont to use as his servants and deacons in regulating the life of mortals.

"The former kind, however, have gone down into the body as into a river, and are in some cases caught and engulfed by the swirl and violence of the whirlpool; but in other cases they manage to resist the current, and after swimming to shore they end by flying off back to the region whence they started. These, then, are the souls of those who were inspired from on high in their philosophy, and from start to finish studied to die to the life of the body, in order to win the life which is disembodied and incorruptible in the presence of Him that is neither begotten nor yet corruptible."

Then follows a deeply interesting chapter, in which Philo weighs the reasons for and against the belief in evil angels or demons; and after his manner he tries to give a higher spiritual meaning to the Enoch myth, with which, it is clear, he was acquainted.

In souls and demons and angels, he says, we have, it is true, different *names*; but in conceiving the thing represented by them all to be one and the same, you will set aside a heavy burden, namely, superstition (lit. fear of demons). However, he continues, just as the many say that there are good demons and bad, and souls to match; so you yourself will not be wrong in supposing that among angels too some are worthy of their good appellation, being in a manner envoys of man to God and of God to man, inviolate and holy by reason of the blameless and noble service so rendered; while others, on the contrary, are unholy and unworthy of the appellation. There is, he adds, evidence for me of this in the declaration of

Philo  
allegorized  
the Enoch  
myth.

Bad demons,  
if real,  
servants of  
divine  
justice.

the hymn-writer (i. e. psalmist) in the following song: "He sent forth among them the wrath of his indignation, anger, and wrath, and tribulation, and missions of wicked angels<sup>1</sup>." These are the wicked ones, he continues, who, falsely assuming the name of angels, know not the daughters of right reason, to wit, the sciences and virtues; but run after mortal offspring of mortal men, to wit, pleasures, which are not arrayed with the true beauty—that is to say, are not beheld in a purely intellectual manner by the mind alone, but with a bastard fairness of form by which the sense is tricked."

In other treatises<sup>2</sup> Philo identified outright the heroes and demons of Greek speculations with the angels of Moses and of holy writ. In one other passage he glances at the popular superstition, namely *De Mon.* 2. 226. 15. The oracular breastplate (λογεῖον) of the high priest is diversified with a double web, of which one half is called Manifestation (δῆλωσις), and the other Truth. By truth it is signified that falsehood may not lawfully mount to heaven; but that all falsehood has been routed and banished into the region near the earth, there dwelling in the souls of wicked men. With which cp. St. John viii. 44: "He is a liar, and the father of it."

There is thus no evidence in the works of Philo that he believed in possession of men's bodies by demons in the crude form in which the New Testament, St. John's Gospel excepted, presents this superstition. It is clear indeed from the passage I have quoted, that Philo was reluctant to believe in the existence even of bad angels; anyhow, he distinctly assigns the belief in bad demons to the vulgar, and betrays his consciousness of the painful evils of contemporary superstition. In many parts of his works he shows a profound acquaintance with medicine and surgery, and he was probably lifted by his culture far above the super-

Philo dis-  
believed  
in bodily  
possession.

<sup>1</sup> Ps. lxxviii. 49.

<sup>2</sup> *De Plant. Noe*, § 4, vol. I, p. 332; *De Somn.* i. 22, vol. I, p. 641.

stitious tendencies which led the Evangelists, if not Jesus himself, to see not only in fever and rheumatism, but even in the winds, demoniacal agencies. In this respect, and yet more in the spirit of comprehensive charity with which he often treats of the sincere beliefs of the pagans in their gods and heroes and demons, he was far in advance not only of the authors of the New Testament, but of all the Fathers of the Church.

With Josephus, whose period of literary activity coincides with that of the Evangelists, we pass from <sup>Josephus</sup> cultured Alexandria into Palestine; and we <sup>believed in</sup> find ourselves at once in an atmosphere of evil <sup>possession.</sup> spirits, such as we are already familiar with in the pages of the New Testament. In his *Antiquities*<sup>1</sup>, Josephus relates how God vouchsafed to King Solomon incantations. "to learn the art of opposing the demons for the succour and healing of men. So that he (Solomon) composed incantations, by which sickness of all sorts is assuaged; and left to posterity methods of exorcising, by which they that are bound can chase away the demons, so that they shall never come back again. And this system of healing," he adds, "still prevails among us." And he <sup>Solomon's</sup> forthwith relates how he saw Eleazar, a fellow <sup>incantations.</sup> Jew, expel, in the presence of Vespasian, a malignant demon, by holding to the nostrils of the man possessed a ring, under the seal of which was one of the roots recommended by Solomon. "By this means he drew out through the man's nostrils, when he had snuffed at it, the evil demon. The man fell down at once, and Eleazar adjured the demon never to return into him, mentioning the name of Solomon, and repeating over him the incantations which he (Solomon) had composed." More than this, to convince the bystanders, Eleazar set a basin of water close by, and commanded the demon in going out of the man to turn it over, and so prove to those who were looking on that it had really left the man.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph., *Antiq.* viii. 2, 5.

If it was believed, in that as in later ages, that a demon cannot pass water, it was natural for this one to trip over and upset the basin. So Jesus believed that a demon, when he quits a man, goes through waterless places in his quest for a resting-place. But we are probably here merely in presence of the belief, common then as now in the East, that the desert is the peculiar home of evil spirits. In another passage<sup>1</sup> Josephus tells us about a certain root, which had the property of instantly driving out the so-called demons; which, he says, were no other than the spirits of wicked men insinuating themselves into the living, and slaying those who have none to help them.

The Old Testament is remarkably free from the stories of possession by demons which are so common in the Synoptic Gospels. Not that kindred elements are altogether absent. For example, the representation of the Lord God in Genesis<sup>2</sup> as snuffing up the sweet savour of sacrifice, recalls Origen's picture of the demons, not to mention many other passages (e. g. Ps. l. (xlix.) 9, 13; 1 Sam. xv. 22; Isa. i. 11-13, lxvi. 3; Amos v. 21, 22), in which a material view of sacrifice is reprobated. By the time of Origen, indeed, more than one attribute of the God of the Old Testament had been passed on to the devils; for the gods of one age are the demons and fairies of the next, and the Old Testament exegesis of Philo, which the Church soon appropriated to itself, made impossible, except with the most vulgar, the ascription to the Almighty of so barbarous a trait.

In the Psalms we already read, as in Enoch and Paul, that the gods of the heathen are devils. In the book of the prophecies of Zechariah (xiii. 2) the Lord of Hosts

threatens to expel the prophets of the idols and the unclean spirits out of the land. In the book of Tobit<sup>3</sup> we read of a simple remedy against a fiend: "Thou shalt take the ashes of some perfume, and shalt lay upon them some of the heart and

<sup>1</sup> *De Bello Iud.* vii. 6, 3.

<sup>2</sup> Gen. viii. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Tobit vi. 10.

liver of the fish, and shalt make a smoke with it. And the devil shall smell it, and flee away, and never come again any more. The which smell, when the evil spirit had smelled, he fled into the utmost part of Egypt<sup>1</sup>. And Raphael the angel went and bound him there." In

Saul's demon. 1 Sam. xix. 9 we read that an evil spirit from the Lord was upon Saul as he sat in his house.

Earlier in the same book, when the spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, an evil spirit from the Lord troubled or terrified him (xiv. 15). In Judges ix. 23 we also read of God sending an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem. In Isaiah we read of the night-monster Lilith, which was of course an evil spirit; and those who wish to realize how profoundly the early religion of Israel was influenced by beliefs in evil spirits, can read about it in Robertson Smith's *Religion of the Semites*.

I could wish that it was sufficient for my purpose to have traced these beliefs in such Jewish writings as immediately preceded or were contemporary with the earliest

Talmud, Christian literature; for I hesitate to approach hard to use. the Talmud in connexion with my subject for two reasons. Firstly, I am not acquainted with it in the original, and so can only use it at second hand; and, secondly, there is a way with apologists, when they are confronted with some striking identity of the thought or practice between the New Testament and the Talmud, of arguing that the Talmud as a later work borrowed it from the New Testament. Thus, the late Dr. Edersheim, in his *Life of Christ*, argues that the comparison of the spirit of God with a dove, which is found in the Talmud, is an echo of the New Testament, regardless of the fact that the same comparison is frequent in the works of Philo, and that the whole of Jewish history after the fall of the Temple makes it extremely improbable that the Talmudists would have borrowed from the New Testament this comparison or any other.

<sup>1</sup> Tobit viii. 3.



Wünsche has published in German a very useful volume of illustrations of the Gospels from Talmudic sources ; and to his work, and to Lightfoot's *Horae Hebraicae*, and Eisenmenger's *Entdeckter Judaismus*, I am indebted for my slender knowledge of this aspect of the later Jewish mind.

Satan then in the Talmud is the slanderer, the accuser, the tempter, and the mischief-maker, according to Berachoth, fol. 58 a. He is not only the evil instinct in man's heart, but an evil agent objectively real and external to man (Wünsche, p. 24, note).

Bodily defects and all physical sufferings, not otherwise explicable, are in the Talmud ascribed to evil spirits. The Mishna, or earliest portion of it, written down before 135 A.D., bears little trace of the belief in possession of evil demons ; but the Babylonian and Jerusalem Gemara, written down respectively as early as 500 and 400 A.D.,

teem with evidence of such beliefs. Their pages make one feel as if Jewish life in the early centuries was a prolonged *Walpurgisnacht*. We learn the names of countless demons, their places of resort, and the various means of rendering them visible, and of confronting them. Every hour of the day and night had its own particular demon, and the whole atmosphere was peopled with them (Berachoth, fol. 6 a). We hear of one, Agrath bat Machlath, who had a following of 180,000 deadly demons, reminding us of the legion of devils in the Gospels. And the Talmudic demons are visible or invisible at will, and assume all sorts of shapes (Joma, fol. 75 a). Like the demons of the New Testament, they haunt the dry, waste, and unfrequented places of the earth, and are especially active at night-time. Like destroying angels, they bring harm, ill-luck, illness, and deformities on mankind ; and they lie in wait for us until some weak act lays us open to their assaults. They enter into some men, take possession of them, and drive them out of human society. Such is the fate of the madman who goes out

alone by night to wander among the tombs of the dead. Upon him an impure spirit falls, by means of whom the possessed reads the future and performs works of necromancy (Chagiga, fol. 3 b). The prince of the demons, by whose aid (Matt. viii. 31) Jesus was accused of casting out devils, was either the Aschmedai or Asmodeus of the Talmud, whose regular title therein is ruler of demons, or Samael, also called Satan. Any one who had this king of evil spirits for his friend was believed to have all hostile spirits subject unto him (Midrash, Vajikra r. par. 5, and Gittin, fol. 68 a. Cp. More Nebuchim, part ii, c. 30).

Lastly, in the Talmud (Meila, fol. 17 b) it is related that Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai could cast out demons exactly as did Jesus. This rabbi was on his way with another to the Court of Rome, to secure the repeal of an edict hostile to the Jewish religion, when a demon called Ben Temelion met him. "May I go with you?" asked the demon. "Let the portent come, whencesoever it be," answered the rabbi. Thereupon the supposed spirit hurried on in front and entered into the daughter of the emperor, who at once went mad, raved and shrieked out continually that they must bring to her the Rabbi Simeon. When he arrived he summoned the froward spirit to go forth, saying: "Depart out of her, Ben Temelion;" and the evil spirit obeyed. "Ask what reward you will," they said to the liberator, leading him into the treasury. There the two rabbis found the edict which was the object of their mission, and at once tore it up.

It has not been noticed by any one that this story is none other than that related in the Acts of Abercius, bishop of Hierapolis, who was visited by a demon, which then went to Rome and possessed Lucilla, daughter of Marcus Aurelius. The girl in her frenzy called for the Christian bishop, or rather the evil spirit in her proclaimed that he would only

A Roman  
emperor's  
daughter  
possessed.

This story  
recurs in  
Acts of  
Abercius.

submit to Abercius, who accordingly, having been sent for in hot haste, came and cured the girl. The Jewish tale was certainly borrowed by the Christian hagiologist of the fourth century, and seems to have in it germs of truth. For the Rabbi Eliezer, and not Ben Jochai, was the envoy who expelled the demon, and the embassy was either to Vespasian or to his son Domitian. This Eliezer was no doubt the same rabbi whose exorcismal powers, displayed before Vespasian and his family, Josephus mentions. Domitilla may have been the emperor's daughter cured by Eliezer<sup>1</sup>.

And in the Talmud we also find the same distinction between merely evil spirits and unclean ones. Unclean or necromantic demons. which is so common in the New Testament. Thus the gloss in Sanhedr., fol. 65, 2, explains the term "spirit of uncleanness" as equivalent to "spirit of the tombs." And a Pythonic or divining spirit was unclean, because the man who was possessed by it acquired it by calling up the dead and sitting on a corpse. Lightfoot supposes—and with good reason—that the man in the synagogue (Luke iv. 33) who had in him a spirit of an unclean devil, and who cried out, "Alas, what have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us?" was a necromancer, such as is described in the above passage of the Talmud. He had wilfully and by magic incantations absorbed the foul spirit of the dead. But some, like the demoniac of Gadara, had been overpowered and forcibly taken possession of by such a spirit, and were by it driven among the tombs. In Wicked spirits. contradistinction to such foul spirits, those which inflicted infirmities merely (*ἀσθενείας*) were only wicked spirits. In the Talmud (Gittin, fol. 77, 2) drunkenness is due to possession by a demon called Cordicus or Cordiacus; and it was probably the fear of being oppressed like Noe, by a demon, rather than a genuinely ascetic

<sup>1</sup> For a fuller discussion of the story see the *Academy* for June 6, 1896.

tendency, which dictates to Mohammedans their strict abstinence from wine. Another evil spirit, called Shibta, assailed male children between the ages of two and seven, seizing the muscles of the neck and so killing them. Such probably was the evil spirit which possessed the epileptic boy in Matt. xvii. 14 (= Mark ix. 33 and Luke ix. 39), and which the disciples could not cast out.

The Talmudists regard as the worst of evil spirits Baal Zebul, who was in a way their prince, and who, reigning among idols and inspiring the oracles of the heathen, wrought their miracles for them.

Talmudic  
charges  
against  
Jesus.

Just as in the New Testament the Jews accuse Jesus of working his miracles by help of Baal Zebul, so in the Talmud he is accused of having been a magician, who by infernal arts got possession of the secret name of the Most High, and with it worked miracles, leading the people astray into idolatry. In the *Acta Pilati* the Jews prefer the same charge against him, that he was a *goês* or cheating wizard.

Thus in the Talmud we find the same beliefs which pervade the New Testament and dominate the writings of the Fathers. And this is entirely what we should expect, for the Talmud was being composed contemporaneously with those writings, namely, from 150 to 500 A. D. It is singular that the Old Testament is so free from demonology, hardly containing—as Lightfoot (*Horae Hebr.*, vol. II, p. 312, ed. 1699) notes—more than one or two examples thereof. Lightfoot's explanation of the relative frequency of cases of possession in the New Testament is not uninteresting. Firstly, the Jewish people, he says, had reached the pitch of iniquity, and so were reaping the full harvest of curses promised in Lev. xxvi. and Deut. xxviii. And secondly, this race, more than any other given up to magic arts, had wooed the devil so earnestly that he had finally taken up his abode in them (*Horae Hebr.*, vol. II, p. 312, ed. 1699).

*Evidence of Greek Pagan Writers.*

The belief in demons is equally to be traced in Greek literature from the earliest period. But it is Classical writers fairly free from superstition. noticeable that in the earlier and more classical writers it rarely comes to the surface. Of a truth the great historians, philosophers, and poets of Athens, and equally the Latin writers of the Republican age and early empire, were drawn as it were from an aristocracy of intellect, and approached more nearly in their freedom from this form of superstition to ourselves than do the authors of any intervening epoch. If, however, we had the books of the poor and uneducated during these two golden epochs of ancient literature, we should certainly find them rife with the crude beliefs which come to the surface and dominate the literature, profane and Christian alike, of the first century A.D. and of all succeeding ages.

Even in Homer, however, as Prof. Tylor points out <sup>1</sup> in his thoughtful chapters on Demonology, "Sick Greek demonological terms. men racked with pain are tormented by a hateful demon (*στυγερὸς δέ οἱ ἔχραε δαίμων*)."<sup>2</sup> And common language revealed the popular belief in possession in its use of such a term as *ἐπίληψις*, "Epilepsy," which is called by Hippocrates and Aristotle the sacred disease (*ἱερὰ νόσος*), because in it the demon took possession of the sick man. If it was a wood-nymph whose spirit took possession of a man, he was *νυμφόληπτος*, a word already used in Plato and Aristotle. But a mad person was simply said to have a demon (*δαμονᾶν*); and the circumstance that Socrates called the supernatural principle which he believed to reside within him a demon (*δαμόνιον*), proves that his contemporaries were familiar with the idea. Indeed, Plato <sup>2</sup> defines a demon as an agent halfway between God and

<sup>1</sup> *Primitive Culture*, vol. II, ch. 15; Hom., *Od.* 5. 396, and 10. 64.

<sup>2</sup> *Symp.* 327 F.

mortal, interpreting and ferrying across to the gods messages from men, and to men those of the gods; the prayers and offerings of the one set, and the behests and acceptances of sacrifice of the other. One such demon was Eros; but they were many and various.

His successors, Xenocrates (396–314 B. C.) and Chrysippus, says Plutarch<sup>1</sup>, following the theology of the ancients, declared the demons to have been superhumanly strong men, in whom the divine element was alloyed with a soul-nature and a faculty of bodily sensation, in virtue of which they felt pleasure and pain. And as among men, so among the demons there were, according to these older authorities, distinctions of virtue and vice. Plutarch actually cites a passage of Xenocrates to the effect that beside the good demons, who, like the gods, must not be invoked on unlucky days, there are in the atmosphere around us great and strong natures or agencies, which are, however, intractable and morose.

Like Enoch, Empedocles<sup>2</sup>—so we read in the same *Empedocles* text—held that these evil demons are punished on Demons. for their sins and offences by the higher cosmic powers; but their punishment is in the nature of a purification (*καθαρθέντες*), after which they regain their natural place and position. Here then we have proof that the idea of good and bad demons—powers of air—was quite familiar to Greek philosophers of the fourth century before Christ. A similar belief is found in Dionysius of Halicarnassus (*Ant. Rom.* i. ii), in Aristides (*T.* ii. p. 106), and Maximus Tyrius (*Diss.* xiv. 8). The belief that the demons are ultimately purified and regain their lost position resembles and may underlie even Origen's view, for which the Church condemned him, that as all things are possible with God, even the Devil himself may at the last be saved.

<sup>1</sup> *De Iside*, 360 E.

<sup>2</sup> On Empedocles see Hippol., *Philosophum*, 3, 1 (*Doxolog.* p. 558).

Chrysippus (350 B. C.) believed<sup>1</sup> that the demons roamed about the world as agents of divine justice to punish the impious and unjust, a view also found in Origen<sup>2</sup>, who quoted in proof of it the same Psalm (lxxviii. 49) which we found Philo quoting in proof of the existence of bad angels. Plutarch<sup>3</sup> also refers to the Ephesian writings (*Ἐφέσια γράμματα*), which the Magi ordered those who were possessed to recite, naming names to themselves. Here Plutarch uses the same word to denote possession (*δαιμονιζόμενοι*) which we find in the Ephesian Gospels. These Ephesian spells, which we spells. already read of in Aristotle, must have contained potent names of which the demons stood in awe. Of such spells or incantations (*ἐπεδαί*), as the Greeks called them from Homer downwards, we have very few specimens left that go back to any great antiquity; and this lacuna in our knowledge of the older religions<sup>4</sup> is largely due to Christian copyists, who whenever they lit on such a formula in a MS., either left it out or substituted a Christian form of exorcism. Such formulae were primarily drawn up with a view to drive off demons. But the strictly medicinal ones, called *ἀλεξιφάρμακα*, were often to be used in conjunction with some root or herb; and every doctor was supposed to know how to expel, not so much diseases in our modern sense, as the demons which produced them.

Egyptian In Egypt during recent years vast numbers papyri. of papyri containing exorcisms have been found, and many of them edited. They are usually full of ancient names, Jewish, Chaldaic, Egyptian, Persian; and much of the apparent gibberish they contain may consist really of prayers in those languages. Origen, as we saw above, insists on the necessity of keeping to the original tongues<sup>5</sup>;

<sup>1</sup> Plut. *Quaest. Rom.* 277 A.

<sup>2</sup> *C. Cels.* viii. 32.

<sup>3</sup> *Symp.* vii. 706 D.

<sup>4</sup> See *Jahrbücher für Classische Philologie*, 1893, art. entitled "Incantamenta magica graeca latina, collegit Ricardus Heim," to which learned and exhaustive monograph I am indebted for much information.

<sup>5</sup> Cp. Pap., *Anastasy*, 486; *Mimant.* 118 (in Wessely): "I am he who called

and the early Christians claimed it to be the great merit of their Lord Jesus that his name was cosmopolitan and known to all demons, whereas the demons were, as a rule, only to be got at by addressing them each in his own tongue.

The prevalence of Jewish names in these formulae agrees with the reputation as exorcists which in antiquity the Jews enjoyed. Origen<sup>1</sup> himself noticed this, and preserves us such a formula in the passage following: "The God of Israel and the God of the Hebrews and the God who overwhelmed in the Red Sea the king of Egypt and the Egyptians, is often brought into the spell and named against demons or against certain evil demons." In this formula the supernatural power is first named, and then it is recited what he has done so as to make it quite clear to the demons what power it is that is brought into play against them. In the formula of Christian exorcism, which I quoted above from Justin Martyr, an early and short form of creed was for the same reason appended to the name of Jesus.

Among the papyri bearing on this subject, one of the Papyrus most remarkable is the Paris 3,009, reprinted exorcism. and re-edited by Dr. A. Dieterich in his remarkable work entitled *Abraaxas* (Leipzig, 1891). It is a ritual for exorcising demons. The exorcist takes oil with certain herbs, and saying a string of gibberish, beginning thus, *Iôêlôssarthiômi emôri theô chipsoîth sithemeôch*, he bids the demon to begone from so-and-so. The formula, *ἐξελθε ἀπὸ τοῦ Δεῖνα*, is that which was commonly used by Jesus. A phylactery was to be written on a tin plate as follows: *Iaeô Abraôthiôch phtha mesen, &c.*, and hung round the neck of the possessed, as calculated to scare off every demon. Then the exorcist took his stand opposite the

thee in Syriac the Great God . . . do Thou I pray, not mishear the sound in Hebrew. Do this thing, because I exorcise thee with the Hebrew sound." (See Anrich, *Antike Mysterienwesen*, p. 96.)

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* iv. 34.



possessed and had to read a long exorcism (*orkismos*), beginning thus: "I adjure (*orkizô*) thee by the God of the Jews, Iaeô<sup>1</sup> Iabaiâ aia thôth ele elô," &c. The most powerful exploits of the God of the Jews, as related in the Old Testament, especially the passage of the Red Sea, are summarized for the good of the demon in some fifty lines, and then the ritual ends thus:

"I adjure thee by him that is in the pure Jerusalem, for whom the unquenchable fire is through all eternity stored up at his command, by his holy name, Iaeô barrenuzoun.

"Recital: Whom Genna of fire trembles before and flames flame up around, and iron and every mountain dreads from its foundations. I adjure thee, every demon-spirit (*pneuma daimonion*), by him who surveys the earth and makes its foundations to quail, and brought all things out of nothing into being. And I adjure thee that receivest from me this form of adjuration (*orkismos*) not to eat swine, and then there shall be subject unto thee every spirit and demon of whatsoever kind. And in adjuring, blow from the extremities and from the feet, removing the blowing (*phusêma*) up unto the face, and it shall be eliminated. Preserve it purely; for the form of words (*logos*) is Hebrew, and preserved among pure men."

Although the above *logos* or ritual form terms itself Hebraic, I have not classed it with the Jewish evidence but with the Greek, because the objective manner in which it alludes to the God of the Hebrews indicates that it was not purely Jewish. It may have been in use among Greek proselytes. Dieterich refers it to the second century B. C. The similarity of its language to that of the New Testament is significant. The passage, "There shall

<sup>1</sup> Dieterich allows *κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν Ἑβραίων Ἰησοῦ* to stand, though of course for the last word *Ἰάω τοῦ* or something similar should be read. For in the same ritual just below we have *ὀρκίζω σὲ μέγαν θεόν Σαβαώθ. Ἰησοῦ* must be a misreading of the papyrus, the contents of which Dieterich refers to a pre-Christian age.

be subject unto thee every spirit and demon," is expressed in the very terms of Luke x. 17, 20.

Origen, we saw, repeatedly insists on the necessity of attaching to the name of God or demon a string of words in which his full history and attributes are given; and in exorcising with the name of Jesus Christ, μαθήματα, or lore, from the Holy Scriptures was added. It was doubtless the necessity of forging a compendious but effective instrument against the devil which helped to give rise to those abstracts of teaching about Christ which we call creeds. And the recitals of the history of Christ<sup>1</sup>, spoken of by Origen<sup>2</sup>, were in all probability nothing else. Traces of the same belief are to be observed in the New Testament. For example, in Acts<sup>3</sup> the Jewish exorcists adjure the evil spirits "by Jesus whom Paul preacheth," so as to make it clear to them which Jesus and what power was enlisted against them. In the same book of the Acts<sup>4</sup> we find Peter appending to the name of Jesus, the Messiah of Nazareth, a brief mention of his life, death, and resurrection, when he explains to the elders of Israel how the sick man had been saved. And in the Gospels we are repeatedly assured<sup>5</sup> that the demons themselves knew from the first who Jesus really was, and recognized him as the Son of God; otherwise they would have needed to be informed. Indeed, the testimony of the demons was barely less weighty and valuable than that of the dove-shaped Holy Spirit or St. Peter.

This practice of adding in an incantation a short history of the demon, or passages from the Sacred Books, is already referred to in Herodotus<sup>6</sup>, who relates that when a worshipper had named the particular god and prepared his expiatory sacrifice, the magus came

<sup>1</sup> Οὐ γὰρ κατακλήσειεν ἰσχύειν δοκοῦσιν (sc. οἱ χριστιανοί), ἀλλὰ τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ μετὰ τῆς ἀπαγγελίας τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν ἱστοριῶν.

<sup>2</sup> Cels. i. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Acts xix. 13.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. iv. 10.

<sup>5</sup> Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24, 34; v. 7.

<sup>6</sup> Herod. i. 132.

forward and sang an incantation, consisting of a theogony or history of the birth and origin of the god—a creed, in fact. The same idea, though not so clearly, inspired most ancient charms used to avert the demons of sickness. In Marcellus<sup>1</sup>, an old medical writer, we accordingly read of a cure for ophthalmia, which consisted in writing on a bit of paper a line of Homer, explanatory of the sun-god's attributes: "Sun, that beholdeth all and heareth all," and then hanging it like a phylactery round the patient's neck. Similarly a short history about a god or goddess had to be recited, and the name, and mother's name, of the sick man specified by the person who dug up the magic root or herb for application. R. Heim, in his valuable monograph<sup>2</sup>, gives many instances of this, and the magic papyri are full of verses of Homer to be thus repeated over the sick, and ancient amulets frequently have the same inscribed on them. The purport of adding such citations of a sacred book was to acquaint the disease-demon with the nature of the power arrayed against him. At the entrance of a mosque in the East are to be seen native scribes, who for a fee write out passages of the Qûran for the use of the sick. Such phylacteries soon become mere fetiches, potent in themselves, as are charms. But in origin they were Holy Scriptures, i. e. histories of the god, written for the instruction of the disease-fiends.

As faith was a condition of Christian cures, so it was of pagan ones. So Marcellus says: "It is only with great faith (*cum magna fiducia*) that we must approach the healing of this kind of illness with this sort of remedy." Alexander<sup>3</sup> of Tralles also insists upon the need of faith: "I exhort you," he says, "not to reveal such lore as this to any and every one, but only to godly persons who know how to keep it secret. For this is why the divine Hippocrates exhorts us, saying: 'Matters that are holy are shown to holy men, but to profane and unbelievers it is

<sup>1</sup> Marcellus Burdigal, viii. 58.

<sup>2</sup> Fleckeisen's *Jahrbücher*, 1893.

<sup>3</sup> Alex. Trall. ii. 377 (ed. Puschmann).

wrong to reveal them.'” Lucian<sup>1</sup> ridiculed this talk about faith as the condition of healing in one of his dialogues, and makes one of his interlocutors, who is the champion of faith-healing, address to the impugner thereof the following rebuke: “You seem to me not even to believe in the existence of the gods, unless at any rate you believe that cures can be wrought by use of sacred names.”

Richard Heim, in the monograph I have referred to, gives many pagan formulae of healing, which illustrate to us how the ancients had many deities to help them against the disease-demons, just as Christians have Christ, the Virgin, and the saints. Thus in a work falsely attributed to Pliny<sup>2</sup> we have the following against quartan ague: “Write on a clean piece of paper, to be attached to the sufferer’s right arm, the words ‘Begone from yonder Gaius Seius, Solomon is after thee (*te sequitur*).’” Here is another formula from an ancient gem: “Flee, O Gout, Perseus pursues thee (*φύγε ποδάγρα, Περσεύς σε διώκει*).” Here is one from Alexander of Tralles<sup>3</sup> against colic: “Take an iron ring, make it octagonal, and inscribe it with the words: Flee, flee, gall of poison, the crested lark is after thee.” In the *Hippiatrica*<sup>4</sup> we have a remedy for distemper in horses. You gave the animal a potion, and *blew* upon him, saying, “Flee then, O evil distemper, Poseidon is after thee (*διώκει σε Ποσειδῶν*).” How vividly do such remedies illustrate the miracle of Jesus when he *rebuked* the fever, “and it left her.” Nor must we forget in this connexion how the ancients raised altars to fever, that scourge of man in southern lands.

In the miracle of Gadara, the demons are transferred to Demons the bodies of animals; for it was the popular transferred. belief that any pest will leave you if you provide for it fresh woods and pastures new. Thus in the *Geoponica* (xiii. 5, 4) we have the following formula against mice: “I exorcise the mice here caught. Do me no harm

<sup>1</sup> *Philops.* 10.

<sup>2</sup> Pseudo-Plin. iii. 15, p. 89 R.

<sup>3</sup> Alex. Trall. p. 377.

<sup>4</sup> *Hippiatrica*, p. 15, c. 22.

yourselves, nor suffer another to do so. For I give unto you *this* field (here he shall name the particular field). But if I catch you here any more, I will invoke the aid of the mother (i. e. Cybele) and cut you into six parts." Here, again, is a cure for toothache from Marcellus<sup>1</sup>: "Put your shoes on and, standing on the earth in the open air, take a frog by the head, open its mouth and spit into it; and you shall ask it to carry off with itself your toothache. Then let it go alive, and from that day and hour you will be quite well." The Arabs to this day believe that a toothache is a fiend sitting in the tooth. Mr. Whitley Stokes has informed me that in Ireland it is still a common belief that diseases can be transferred from human beings into animals; and that in India the people think that the transferee may be a plant.

Again, if your liver distressed you, you could, according to Marcellus<sup>2</sup>, catch a green lizard, and by observing certain precautions get it to carry away in itself your malady; and you had to address the lizard thus: "Behold, I will let you go alive. See that, no matter what I eat, my liver shall give me no trouble."

The same writer gives a receipt for transferring a man's stomach-ache into a live hare<sup>3</sup>; and Pliny the elder (died 79 A.D.) gives<sup>4</sup> this cure for the bite of a scorpion: "You at once whisper into the ear of a jackass: A scorpion has stung me; and the pain will be immediately transferred into the animal."

And though it does not come under Greek or Latin examples, let me conclude this section with a more modern instance furnished by Prof. Tylor<sup>5</sup>: Charles VI of France was possessed, and a priest tried in vain to transfer his demon into the bodies of twelve men who were chained up to receive it. That the Christian fathers themselves regarded the Gadarene swine in the light suggested by the magic remedies which I have quoted, is clear from some

<sup>1</sup> Marc. xii. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. xxii. 11.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. xx. 66.

<sup>4</sup> Pliny, xxviii. 155.

<sup>5</sup> *Prim. Cult.*, vol. II, ch. 14.

lines of St. Gregory of Nyssa which occur on an amulet. In these the disease is first bidden to flee from the patient's head, and the epigram ends thus: "Christ the king commands thee to flee into the depths of the sea, or down the rocks, or into the herd of swine, like the destructive legion long ago. So get thee gone."

Just as the Greeks called a madman *δαιμονιζόμενος*, so the Romans called him *larvatus*, i. e. one filled with a larva or ghost. "*Iam deliramenta loquitur; larvæ stimulant virum*," says Plautus (*Capt.* iii. 4, 66), who is fond of both the word and the idea. So the Jews said to Jesus, by way of indicating that he was mad, "Thou hast a devil."

In Apuleius' (born 130 A.D.) *De deo Socratis* we have a philosophy of demons, whom he classifies according as they were immortal spirits that had never been embodied, or merely the ghosts of deceased men, good or bad. His doctrine is the same as Philo's, and the frequent identity of his thought and phrase with Philo's proves that both writers drew from an old and pre-Christian source. Apuleius, however, does not, any more than Philo, propound a theory of possession, and we cannot certainly say that he believed in it. It is worthy of remark, however, that he believed that demons were sometimes visible, though oftener they were not.

Departing from the chronological order of writers, and reserving the works of Pausanias and of Philostratus, let us next take account of the views of Porphyry, who was born in Palestine about 233 A.D., because in him we have a more complete philosophy of demons than in any pagan writer of the first three centuries, excepting Apuleius. Except that he admitted the existence of good demons as well as of bad, Porphyry's beliefs are identical with those of Origen. And even this difference is only nominal, since his good demons are identical with Origen's angels. But, in spite of such resemblances, we cannot suppose that he was

Beliefs of  
Porphyry  
same as  
Origen's.

influenced by Christianity, of which he was a bitter opponent. The truth is that the Pagans, Christians, and Jews of the first five centuries all breathed the same air, and were inspired by the same beliefs about good and evil spirits. There was some difference of names, but nothing more. All minds moved together on the same plane. The malignant demons live, according to Porphyry<sup>1</sup>, close to the earth; are sometimes visible, sometimes not. They love the blood and stench of victims slain, and grow strong and fat upon it. They disguise themselves as animals, and have Serapis, who is the same as Pluton, for their president. They are ambitious to be thought real gods, and therefore seduce men into worshipping them by working signs and wonders. Their president would fain supplant the Supreme God in men's minds.

They ever lie in wait for men, and fall upon them; for *ἐμπτωσις*, "falling upon," is Porphyry's word for possession; and his dread of possession made him a fervent advocate of vegetarianism. For eaters of blood and flesh lay themselves open to the risk of demons insinuating themselves (*εἰσδύνειν*) into their bodies. Abstinence alone could keep them off, as Jesus and the unknown author of the Clementine homilies had long before taught. The demons, furthermore, when they enter one along with the flesh-eaters cause him whom they thus possess to emit obscene sounds and winds, a proof that they are enjoying themselves within the glutton's belly. It is the business of priests, says Porphyry, to drive out (*ἐξελαύνειν*) the demons, in order that when they have departed God may enter (*ἵνα τούτων ἀπελθόντων παρουσία τοῦ θεοῦ γένηται*). And purificatory rites (*ἀγνεῖαι*) are not primarily celebrated for the sake of the gods at all, but simply to get rid of demons (*ἵνα οὗτοι ἀποστῶσι*). A house is full of demons, and we must purify it first (*προκαθαίρουσι*) and eject (*ἀποβάλλουσι*) them, whenever we would call upon

<sup>1</sup> *Ap. Euseb.*, pr. ev. iv. 22 seq.

God. Such purificatory rites were the pagan analogues to baptismal and other exorcisms among Christians. Porphyry is a late writer, and so it may be argued that he was influenced by the Christianity around him. But according to Eusebius in the same context, Porphyry was largely following Theophrastus (died 281 B.C.). The latter writer specially taught that the beings to whom sacrifices were appropriate and fitting offerings were not gods, but only demons, deceitful and wicked.

Origen lets us know that Celsus<sup>1</sup>, the assailant of Christianity during the reign of Antoninus Pius, not only believed in demons, but reckoned Jesus to have been one. Celsus believed<sup>2</sup> that demons watched over every region of the earth, and over all the periods of human life; and he was not even averse to the Egyptian belief, that thirty-six demons preside over the thirty-six parts of which the body is made up, and that cures<sup>3</sup> can only be effected by invoking them. However, Celsus was suspicious<sup>4</sup> of the worship of demons as likely to involve men in magic arts, and make them forgetful of beings higher than demons. "For," says he, "we should not perhaps distrust wise men who say that most of the demons that haunt the earth (*περιγεῶν*) are immersed in material things and riveted to blood and reek of altars, and are led captive by monstrous chantings, and are enchained by other such charms, so that they can hardly do more than heal the body, and foretell what is going to happen to a man or to a community. What concerns the actions of perishable beings, this much and no more do they know and are able to do."

We see from such passages as the above that, as regards demons, Origen stood with his feet on the same ground as Celsus and Porphyry, the representative pagans of the second and third centuries; not only so, but their common doctrine of the natures, habits, and faculties of demons is

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* viii. 39.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* viii. 55.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* viii. 58.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* viii. 60.



carried back by Celsus' reference to the wise men, with whom he hesitated to disagree, to an earlier period than his own, certainly to the first century of our era. Theophrastus, to whom we have already alluded, may very well have been one of these wise men. His picture of demons feeding on blood and reek of sacrifice is identical with that drawn by Celsus. These wise men were also pagans, or Celsus would not speak of them with so much respect.

Another of Origen's extracts from Celsus bearing upon Demons in demons is to be noticed, because of the allusion dry places. it contains to demons that lived in waterless places. "As many demons," he says, "as live in dry places (τόποις ἐνδιατρύβουσιν ἀνχμηροῖς) and have their bodies rather dry (ὑπόξηρα), as are, they say, the demons with donkey's legs—all these transform themselves into human beings, though they occasionally liken themselves to dogs and lions and other animals that have a manly look about them." Now the empusa or hobgoblin, of whom we read in Aristophanes<sup>1</sup> and Demosthenes<sup>2</sup>, also had donkey's legs. It is clear then that the demon who sought rest in waterless places was one of these dry demons that had a partiality for the human form divine, though he had donkey's legs, as Satan in Christian pictures of him has those of a goat, like an ancient fawn. Thus he was quite a classical being. It may have been an ancient belief that evil spirits cannot pass running water. It has certainly been so in later times. "A running stream they dare na' cross," as Burns wrote in his *Tam o' Shanter*. In this case there was a bridge, and yet the demons in pursuit of Tam could not cross it; any more than the evil spirits in the *Avesta* could cross the Chinvat bridge over the water into heaven. But neither could the good souls have entered Paradise without this bridge, which was a *farsang* in breadth. The shades of old equally required Charon with his boat to ferry them over the Styx; and in the folklore of every race we find bridges, often merely of

<sup>1</sup> Aristoph. *Ran.* 293, and *Ecol.* 1056.

<sup>2</sup> Demosth. 270, 25.

string, stretched over a river, provided for demons and souls of men to cross by. Mr. Whitley Stokes reminds me that in the Vision of Adamnan there is given an elaborate description of such a bridge. But I suspect that the New Testament demons simply resorted to waterless places because the dry desert was the natural haunt of evil spirits, as in Isaiah. Edom laid waste is to be the home of the satyr and night-monster.

In another passage Celsus<sup>1</sup> relates how he had seen in the hands of certain presbyters, of the Christian persuasion, barbarous (i. e. non-Greek) books containing the names of demons and gibberish. These books which Celsus saw the Christians use must have been similar to some of the magic papyri found in recent times in Egypt, in which the name of Jesus competes with the names of Abraham, Solomon, and other Hebrew worthies, and even with those of pagan deities. The barbarous tongue which the Christian presbyters used in the middle of the second century was no doubt Aramaic or Hebrew.

It is in the life of Apollonius by Philostratus that we have some of the most remarkable tales of Apollonius of Tyana. demons and exorcism which remain to us in Greek literature. Apollonius was a contemporary of Jesus Christ, and made it his mission, as a follower of Pythagoras, to banish from the religion of his Greek contemporaries sacrifices of animal victims. He died in Ephesus, where he may very well have come into contact with St. John. Several contemporary writers left lives or memoirs of him which are unfortunately lost, so that we depend for our knowledge of him on the life by Philostratus, a sophist born 182 A. D.

The scene of the following incident is laid in India, and it seems to have been taken by Philostratus from the memoirs of the sage, composed by his credulous demon. Syro-Greek follower Damis. There was brought to him a woman who besought him to heal her son,

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* vi. 40.

a boy sixteen years of age, who had been possessed for two years by a demon of an ironical and lying disposition. Her account of it was that this demon was in love with her child because of his good looks; and that it allowed him to have no sense, nor to go to school or drill nor yet remain at home, but drove him out into desert places. "And the boy moreover had lost his own voice, and spoke in a deep hollow tone, like a grown up-man; and looked at you with another's eyes rather than with his own. And I, said the mother, weep and mope and reprove my son, as is natural, but he does not know me." The demon, she went on, had used the boy's voice to proclaim himself, and said that he was the shade of a man who had died long ago on the battlefield, and out of disgust for his wife—who had married another man on the third day after his death—he had transferred his affections to this child. The demon, we read, was very angry with the mother when she proposed to appeal to Apollonius for aid, and threatened to kill her son if she accused him to the sage. The boy was far away, so Apollonius merely took a letter out of his bosom, full of threats of a kind to scare off the shade, and gave it to the mother, saying, "Be of good cheer, for he will not kill your boy when he has read this." The threats which cowed this demon were probably similar to those used by Christian exorcists. They were of burnings and tortures, such as we read of in the Book of Enoch, in Minucius Felix, in Tertullian, and in the Gospels. In another story, which I shall quote, of Apollonius this point is made certain.

Here is the outline of another story<sup>1</sup> which Philostratus relates on the authority of the same Damis. The demon and the bridegroom. Menippus, a young philosopher, was to marry a rich and beautiful Phoenician girl at Corinth. The sage appeared at the marriage-banquet, and denounced the bride as a *φάσμα* or ghost, of the kind known as an *empusa* or *lamia* or *mormolukia*, a species of hobgoblin

<sup>1</sup> Philostr., *Vit. Apollon.* iv. 24.

given up to sensual enjoyment, and after a while devouring the body of the youths they seduce. Instantly all the lights and goblets vanished from the young man's eyes, and the ghost appeared to weep; and she besought the sage not to punish her, nor compel her to avow what she was. But he pressed her hard and gave her no respite till she admitted that she was an empusa, and was fattening Menippus with pleasures in order to devour his body. Ἐλέγχειν, to convict, is the word used<sup>1</sup> in this book to express the sage's triumph over the demons. So, we saw in reading Tertullian and Minucius Felix, the Christian exorcist's success lay in his being able to force the demons to own to being demons and nothing more.

On another occasion a drunken youth scoffed at Apollonius for his piety<sup>2</sup>. But he looked up at him and said, " 'Tis not thou that art thus insolent, but the demon who drives thee on without thy knowing it." And apparently, goes on the narrator, the young man was possessed without being aware of it; for he kept laughing at things at which no one else laughed, and then would fall to weeping without any cause, and talked and sang to himself. After a while Apollonius fixed him with his eye, and the shade (εἶδωλον), after it had uttered sounds of fear and wrath, proper to beings who are being *burned and tortured*, at last swore that he would leave the youth and never fall on any man again. Then the sage, speaking in anger, as a master would to a criminal and shameless slave, bade the demon give a token of his departure as he went out. "I will throw down yonder statue," answered the demon, pointing to one of those which lined the king's stoa. And the statue at first moved slightly, and then fell with a crash. There was an uproar of applause; but the youth, as if he had just woke up, rubbed his eyes and looked at the sunlight, and was ashamed, because all eyes were turned on him. And from that day he gave up riotous living, and was a serious

<sup>1</sup> Philostr., *Vit. Apollon.* vi. 11, p. 112.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. iv. 20. 72.

*dévoué* of philosophy, and a pupil of Philostratus. This story also is given in a context which shows that Damis was the original teller of it. It illustrates the early Christian belief that statues and idols were inhabited and possessed by evil spirits.

It is astonishing that even critical writers, like Baur and A. Reville, have suggested that these tales were composed by Philostratus in imitation of the Gospel narrative. It is true that Hierocles, the persecutor of the Christians at the end of the third century, casting about for a cult and a demi-god to play off against Christ and Christianity, pitched upon Apollonius. But no careful reader of the work of Philostratus, composed nearly a hundred years earlier, can entertain such a notion. If these anecdotes were drawn from Damis, as the context serves to show, they must have been originally penned before 100 A. D., at the very time when, and in the very localities in which, the Gospel was shaping itself out of oral traditions of Jesus. Unfortunately, we have not got the actual memoirs of Damis, and only know them through the references which Philostratus gives to them; but Eusebius, who probably had access to them, does not suggest that either Damis or Philostratus had any idea in composing them of imitating Christ's miracles. He is indeed sceptical about some of the miracles<sup>1</sup> related of Apollonius, but is far from accusing Philostratus of having coined them. On the contrary, he ascribes them by implication to the inventiveness of Damis the Syrian, when he blames, as he does, Philostratus for not having followed the more sober biography of Apollonius, composed by Moeragenes. Nor does Eusebius for long maintain this critical attitude, so unusual to him, in regard to the demon stories; for he ends by candidly admitting<sup>2</sup> that they were true, and argues that Apollonius really worked miracles, but by infernal means only. He had merely ejected lesser demons with the aid of a greater one. If, then, there is

Trustworthi-  
ness of  
Philostratus.

<sup>1</sup> Euseb. in *Hierocl.* 432.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 456, 457, 459.

a certain resemblance between the miracles of Apollonius and those of the Gospel narratives, it is assuredly due to the fact that the evangelists, like Damis, were Syro-Greeks. It should be further observed in confirmation of this view that there is a very close resemblance between Philostratus' story of the demon that threw down a statue as it went out of the youth, and that told by Josephus of the demon that tipped over a basin of water in its exit. This, and not any Gospel miracle, is therefore the nearest analogue. And this resemblance to Josephus demonstrates not only that Philostratus had no thought of imitating the New Testament, which there is no reason to suppose he had ever read, but that the tale, though only preserved in the pages of the later rhetorician, may yet date from the first century. And if Damis, a Syro-Greek follower of Apollonius, had such things to tell of his own master; why should not the followers of Jesus, also Syro-Greeks, have told similar stories of him? I believe that if the memoirs of Damis could be recovered, they would go farther to establish the antiquity and *bona fides* of the evangelistic records than all the apologetic commentaries ever written.

We have seen how, during the first three centuries of our era, Pagans and Christians vied with one another in credulity; and this monotony of superstition forms a dark background over which, in the latter half of the second century, there suddenly flashes out, like summer lightning, the wit and good sense of the single rationalist writer of that long period, whose works remain to us.

I refer to Lucian of Samosata, who, being born about 130 A.D., was exactly a contemporary of Irenaeus. This writer, in a dialogue entitled "Philopseudes, or the Lover of Lies," has satirized with the most subtle irony the faith, so general in his age, in magic cures and in demonic agencies of every kind. He begins with an ironical defence of the old classical myths, which, as having inspired much that was beautiful in art and poetry, were respectable in comparison with

Lucian, the  
Voltaire of  
the second  
century.

what was believed in his own age. "And what would become of Hellas," he asks, "if you took away the halo with which these myths surround her? Why, the *cicerones* would die of starvation, for the visitors they show around would not care to hear the truth, even if they paid nothing for the privilege." Substitute Palestine for Hellas, and a modern Syrian dragoman for the ancient *periegetes*, and how much of truth, old and new, have we not in this remark?

The scene of the dialogue is laid in a sick-room, and His dialogue, there are present, the physician Antigonus, and Philopseudes, a long-bearded philosopher Eucrates, and one Ion. A remedy is propounded to ease the pain in the sick man's legs. It is this: Take with the left hand off the ground the tooth of a field-mouse killed in a particular way; tie it into the skin of a lion just flayed off, and wrap it round the legs, accompanying each action with the proper incantation.

Lucian hints a doubt whether even the Nemean lion's skin would be much use. And why, he asks, should a fever or a swelling be afraid of a miraculous name or a formula uttered in a barbarous tongue, and forthwith run away out of the groin? Are not such remedies old wives' tales? The answer made by Dinomachus, the champion of the superstition impugned, is one not peculiar to the second century: "If you don't believe that cures are wrought by means of holy names (*ιερώων ὀνομάτων*), why, then you must be an atheist." Lucian is not convinced; so to confute the sceptic, another interlocutor recounts a cure which he had himself witnessed. His gardener had been stung on the big toe by a viper, and was lying down and like to die. A Babylonian was fetched, who set the sick man on his legs at once, and drove the poison out of his body with a certain incantation, and by merely tying to his foot a bit of stone chipped out of the tomb of a dead virgin.

This is the first allusion I know of in literature to the

efficacy of the relics of a dead saint, though we have, of course, in Acts<sup>1</sup> much earlier testimony to the virtues inherent in handkerchiefs or aprons taken from the body of a live one.

Ion follows up this experience with a still better one.

The Chal-  
daean and  
the snakes. There was a field infested by reptiles. The same Chaldaean came at dawn and pronounced over it, out of an ancient book, certain names hieratic in character and seven in number. At the same time he purified the ground with a sulphur torch, going round it thrice. Out marched the serpents many, and asps and vipers, and horned snakes and adders, and toads and bullfrogs; all except one old dragon, who from age could not creep out, or else did not hear aright the summons to quit. But the magus knew that one was left in; so he chose out the youngest snake and sent him to fetch the old one, who thereupon came forth in a trice. And when they were all mustered, the Babylonian blew upon them, and they were all burned up in a second by his breath, to the astonishment of the bystanders. "And please tell me, interrupts Lucian, how did the old dragon manage? Did the young serpent, sent back as ambassador, lead him by the hand, or had he a walking-stick to help him along?"

Then another of the faithful recites what he had seen, namely, a certain Hyperborean sage walking on the sea in his native brogues, and floating in the air; not to mention the demons which he could bring up, and the stale corpses which he called back to life.

Lucian is still incredulous. "What then," asks Ion, "do you say to those who rid the possessed of their bogies (*δαιμόνων*), and who so manifestly exorcise or 'sing out' (*ἐξάδοντες*) the spectres (*φασμάτων*)? I need not," he goes on, "speak of what I have seen myself; for is not every one familiar with the Syrian from Palestine who is an expert in these

The  
exorcism  
of the  
possessed.

<sup>1</sup> Acts xix. 12.



matters? Think of how many people he gets hold of, who swoon with the moon and roll their eyes and foam at the mouth, and yet he sets them on their legs and sends them away all right, provided he is well paid for getting rid of their ills. For so soon as he stands over them, as they lie on the ground, and asks whence they came when they entered the body, the sick man himself says nothing, but the demon answers in Greek or in a barbarous tongue, and says where he is from, and how and why he entered into the man. Then the Syrian brings his exorcisms into play, and if the demon does not obey, he threatens him, and so drives him out. Why, I myself saw one go out whose complexion was black and of the colour of smoke."

"Oh, that's nothing!" answers Lucian. "Why you, Ion, can even see the ideas of your father Plato, which are a very dim spectacle to my weak eyes."

We recall the title, "The Black One," applied by Barnabas to the Devil; we recall Tertullian's demons that blushed with shame when the Christians cast them out; we think of the dragon in Revelations, of the miracles of Lazarus,

Did Lucian of the Gadarene, and others. And at first sight  
 assail we are inclined to suppose that the shafts of  
 Christian Lucian's satire are directed against Christianity.  
 super-  
 stition?

The magician blows on the reptiles as Christ blew on his disciples, and as Christian priests and exorcists blew upon catechumens and others from whom demons had to be ejected<sup>1</sup>. Not only this, but the Syrian from Palestine consumes them with his breath as Christ was to consume the anti-Christ. The possessed in Lucian lie down on the ground to be exorcised, even as they were cast upon the earth by the demons of the Gospel, and as they also lay down in the exorcistic ritual of the Church<sup>2</sup>. But our inference would be too hasty, for the blowing was

<sup>1</sup> So Cyril Hierem. (*Catech.* I. c. v. p. 18) prays that his catechumens may be blessed, whether they had been blown upon or exorcised (*καὶ ἐμφυσήθῃς καὶ ἐπορκισθῇς*).

<sup>2</sup> See the *Dictionary of Christian Antiquities*, art. Exorcism.

the regular way of driving out evil spirits. You blew in a good spirit and the bad ones made off. Hence the luckiness of a sneeze among all races, civilized or savage, for it is a symptom that you are full of good spirits; just as with Porphyry, internal wind betokens an evil spirit inside one's stomach. Celsus, so Origen informs us<sup>1</sup>, had seen quacks in the public places of Alexandria selling for a few pence their august formulae (*μαθήματα*), and driving out demons from men, and *blowing away diseases* (*νόσους ἀποφυσῶντας*), and calling up the shades of heroes, and feasting their dupes on course after course of imaginary viands. If Celsus *saw* all this, why could not Lucian his contemporary satirize it? To see in his satire, as many have done, a covert attack on Christianity, is absurd. But even if it were without the parallel testimony of Celsus, the context in Lucian would of itself assure us that he is assailing not the Christians but the Neo-Platonists.

It is true that a few pages further on, when Antigonus Raising of the dead. declares that he knew a man who had risen from the dead twenty days after his burial, and that he had attended him professionally both before his death and after his resurrection, we are tempted to see an allusion to the story told by Irenaeus and also to that of Lazarus. But there is no real reason why we should. People rose from the dead with some frequency in those times, and the *ὑστερόποτοι*, or persons who had come back to life, were so numerous that the right mode of their re-entry into their properties had to be regulated by custom. They were to come back through a hole in the roof, and not through the gates or doors. There is a certain class of critics who insist upon seeing in any history of a demon exorcised or of a dead man raised to life, no matter who the writer, an imitation of and a covert attack on the Gospel miracles. If they only read a little further they would realize that such incidents were extremely common in almost any age except our own.

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* i. 68.

Let me close my chapter upon pagan demonology with the delightful story of the Demon of Temessa, told by Pausanias (bk. vi. p. 184 of ed. 1583).

After the fall of Troy, Ulysses was driven by the winds from one to another of the cities of Italy and Sicily, and in the course of his wanderings touched at Temessa also. There one of his sailors ravished a virgin after intoxicating her with drink; and the citizens, to avenge the insult, stoned him to death. Ulysses left the outrage unpunished and departed; but the shade of his murdered companion continued to rage against the inhabitants of Temessa of all ages, so that they at last thought of quitting their country to escape from the pest. Before taking this final step they consulted the Pythian Apollo, who in an oracle bade them appease the hero and, consecrating a site, raise a temple to him. They were moreover, to devote to the dead hero, year by year, the most beautiful they could find of their virgins. This they proceeded to do, and thenceforth they went unmolested. It happened, however, one day, that a man named Euthymus came to their city, just when the usual sacrifice was being offered to the god. And they say that when he heard of it, he asked to be allowed to enter the temple. There he beheld the girl, and at first he pitied her, but soon his pity turned to love; and the girl promised that she would be his if he saved her. So he seized his arms and did battle with the demon, overcame him, and drove him beyond the walls and out of the territory; and the demon, thus banished from the company of men, drowned himself in the sea. "And they relate, continues Pausanias, that after the entire city was thus delivered from the foulest of calamities, Euthymus had a very splendid wedding. And about this Euthymus, he says, I have myself learned from very ancient monuments that he lived to a great old age, and did not die after all, but ceased to be a man in some other way. Temessa is still inhabited up to my day, so I heard from a merchant who

had sailed thither. All this I only heard, says Pausanias in conclusion; but what follows I know, because I saw it in a picture, which in turn was a copy of an old picture. The picture represented a youth of Sybara, and the river Calatrus, the spring Calyce; and there was Hera as well, and the town of Temessa, and among these was the demon whom Euthymus cast out. And in colour he was awfully black (*δευῶς μέλας*), and his appearance altogether most awful. But he wore for raiment a wolf's skin, and his name was given in letters on the picture as Lybas." Pausanias wrote soon after the middle of the second century; but Strabo, who died A.D. 25, glances (p. 255) at the same legend. The demon terribly black is already familiar to us in the epistle of St. Barnabas.

Tatian, who was a pupil of Justin Martyr, and flourished about A.D. 150-180, is our first explicit witness to the existence of all four Gospels, of which he made a concordance. In his address to the Greeks, he seems to incline to a rather more material view of the nature of demons than most of the early Fathers. "The Demons," he writes<sup>1</sup>, "so called by the Greeks, are composed of matter (*hulé*), and have acquired therefrom spirit (*pneuma*). They are dissolute and greedy beings." But he does not consistently maintain this view; for in the next sentence he admits that some of them have turned towards what is purer (i.e. in matter), and that not all turn toward that which is inferior, and adapt their conduct thereunto. "These demons," he continues, "you Greeks worship; and they are generated out of matter, but far removed from its true order. For through their own wickedness they became vainglorious, and taking the bit between their teeth, they were eager to become stealers of the godhead. But the Lord of all allows them to plume themselves, only until the present world (*kosmos*) reaches its term and is destroyed, and the Judge comes."

And after a little, Tatian writes in a way which enables

<sup>1</sup> *Ad. Gr.* 255.

us to understand the animism of the Gospels. "There is," he declares, "a spirit in the stars, a spirit in the angels, a spirit in plants and waters, a spirit in men, a spirit in animals. It is one and the same spirit, but it has differences in itself."

Further on in the treatise (p. 257), Tatian has more to tell of the nature of demons. They have, he says, no flesh at all; but their composition is spiritual (*πνευματική*), like that of fire or of air. Demons have not flesh. And only those who are under the protection of the Spirit of God can easily behold the bodily nature of demons. Other men, namely the psychics (*psuchikoi*), cannot see them<sup>1</sup>. For the lesser cannot rise to a comprehension of the greater.

The demons cannot repent, being emanations or rather radiations of matter and wickedness. Nor are they not souls of those demons who impose commands on men dead men. the souls of deceased men. For the latter will not gain through death gifts of power and insight which they had not when alive in the body. No; demons to please their own ill-will revel like Bacchants inside men, and pervert our depraved and sunken wills with various lies as if we were puppets, in order to frustrate our attempts to soar upwards to heaven. Psychics also, he goes on to admit, can see demons, but only if the latter reveal themselves, in order to impose on their dupes, so that they may be worshipped by them as being something better than they really are. If they could, the demons would drag down heaven itself in their own ruin. But this, being made of inferior and lower matter, they cannot do. They are only able to take credit to themselves for causing diseases and dissensions in the matter (*hulé*) within us, by assailing us whenever we are ill. Sometimes, however, they of themselves disturb by the hurricane of their own wickedness the state of our bodies. But in such cases they will depart in fear if we Possession.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

smite them with the recital of God's power. In such a manner the sick man is to be healed.

Let me sum up the points of chief importance in these records of demonological belief and practice  
Summary. among the pagans.

1. As early as the fourth century B. C., Xenocrates and Chrysippus, Empedocles and Theophrastus, taught that there were evil demons as well as good ones. These evil ones were often the departed spirits of bad men, and were in the end to be punished and so purified. They, and not the true gods, delighted in the sacrifice of live animals.

2. The evil stories related of the gods were in reality true, not of the gods, but only of bad demons. This teaching we meet with not only in these older writers, but in Dionysius of Halicarnassus<sup>1</sup>, who died B. C. 7. It was really meant as an attempt on the part of pious Greeks to purge their religious stories of the gross immoralities which disfigured them. But in the hands of Christian apologists it became a weapon against the entire fabric of the older religion. The gods of the heathen were evil demons, and therefore it was that they committed these immoralities. As R. Heinze truly remarks<sup>2</sup>, the substitution by the Christians of evil demons for the ancient gods was suggested and grew out of the old Greek philosophy itself.

3. There are indications in Plutarch, who was born about 40 A. D., of the exorcism of demons by the use of names. Lucian's dialogues prove that in the second century the use of names was very common. Moreover, the Ephesian formulae, already mentioned by Aristotle, were exorcisms.

4. Except, however, in popular language, there is little notice taken in pagan writers of demoniacal possession before the first century A. D. After that century it is extremely common; and literary pagans of the second and third centuries held practically the same beliefs as

<sup>1</sup> Dionys., *Halic.* ii. 47.

<sup>2</sup> *Xenocrates*, p. 116.

the Christian writers who were their contemporaries. Concurrently with Christianity, itself in a Roman's eyes a Syrian superstition, there was a diffusion over the Greek and Roman worlds of oriental demonological beliefs akin to the Christian.

5. The pagans, like Celsus, were in a sense less of heathens than Origen, in that their view of nature was less sombre. Celsus<sup>1</sup> attributed less influence to evil demons, and consequently more to good ones, and to the Almighty God, whose agents the good demons are. God, he held, could not be injured, and was pleased when honour was rendered to good demons. We must not forget to be grateful to the good demons, because there are bad ones. The objectionable element in ancient myths he regarded as mere poetic lies, and he was in this respect less superstitious than the Christian Fathers who condemned, yet believed, such myths.

F. C. CONYBEARE.

<sup>1</sup> *C. Cels.* viii. 66, 33; iv. 33.

**Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania**

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christian Demonology. III

Author(s): F. C. Conybeare

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## CHRISTIAN DEMONOLOGY.

## III.

*Evidence of Assyrian Monuments.*

It is much to be desired that some scholar, able to decipher for himself the cuneiforms of ancient Assyria and well acquainted with the general history of magic, should write a book in which the outlines of Assyrian beliefs should be clearly and fully traced from the ancient monuments and illustrated from the copious material which the records of later superstition afford. Such a book would show how persistent and how uniform have been, not only the beliefs in evil spirits, but the magical practices and methods of exorcizing them, from the earliest dawn of human civilization in Mesopotamia some 4,000 years B. C. down to the eighteenth century. In Europe and North America we are not wholly emancipated yet from such beliefs; but among the more backward civilizations of India, China, and the Pacific they are still everywhere alive and active. If, then, the phrase *quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus* holds true of any body of belief it holds good of these; and the Church possesses no real Catholicity<sup>1</sup>, such as is claimed for it, except in so far as there lies imbedded in the New Testament, in the writings of her Fathers and in her rituals, this primitive element of demonological belief and practice.

<sup>1</sup> Cp. Pliny the Elder (*Hist. Nat.* xxx. 4) who, speaking of magic, says: "Adeo ista toto mundo consensere, quamquam discordi et sibi ignoto."

In exploring the ruins of Koyoundjik Sir Henry Layard came on a large subterranean chamber littered to a depth of half a yard with cuneiform tablets. The library of Assur-bani-pal. He had found the library of king Assur-bani-pal. But the texts so found did not all belong to so late an epoch as that monarch's, who succeeded only in B. C. 669. Masses of them were in the Sumero-Accadian dialect which preceded the Semitic language in the basin of the Tigris and Euphrates, and which was their sacred language; and these Sumero-Accadian clay books contained also versions in Assyrian of their contents, so that our Assyriologists can translate them for us. Prof. Sayce puts back much of this literature, especially the magical incantations and exorcisms, to about the year 3600 B. C. So remote is the epoch to which we can trace back a faith in evil spirits, in possession by them, in the use of names, identical with that of the New Testament writers.

Assyro-Chaldaean magic, says Babelon<sup>1</sup>, rested on the belief that innumerable spirits are dispersed all over nature, directing and animating all created beings. They cause good and evil, guide the heavenly bodies, bring on day after night and night after day, watch over the return of the seasons, cause winds to blow and rain to fall, with snow, hail, and thunderbolts. They too make the land fertile or barren, generate and destroy life, send health or disease and death. They are everywhere—in the heaven of stars, in the bowels of earth, or in the middle regions of the air. Earth, air, fire and water are full of them.

Of these spirits some are good, some bad by nature, and their opposing hosts form a vast dualism embracing the universe. But the Chaldaeans were more concerned with the bad than with the good spirits; and the chief purport of their incantations was to expel the evil from men and introduce good ones in their place. For in Nineveh and Babylon

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Anc. de l'Orient*, new edition, tom. V, p. 194.

there were no physicians in our sense of the words, but only priests armed with mysterious formulae in the dead and sacred dialect which the demons alone understood and respected, but of which the common people had no knowledge. Like Origen's demons, those of ancient Assyria liked to be addressed in a sacred language which they understood.

As in Christianity, so in the old Assyrian religion, there was a mediator, Marduk the Merciful, called in the Sumerian dialect Silik-mulu-hi, i. e. he that arranges good for man, reveals to men the wishes and thoughts of Êa, the spirit of heaven. Says Marduk: "I am he that walks before Êa, I cause hymns to be sung unto Êa, I war (with the evil spirits), I am his eldest son, his messenger." Like the Christ, he is "The Son unto whom the Father revealeth all things."

The following piece gives us an idea of the mediatorial activity of Marduk; I extract it from a French work of M. Halévy, *Documents religieux de l'Assyrie et de la Babylonie*, Paris, 1882, p. 54. The particular piece which I select for illustration is entitled a "Magic incantation against Head-ache." It runs thus:—

## 1.

"Incantation. The (demon) Head-ache runs up from the desert, blowing like the wind. He thunders like the lightning, he skims high and low. He breaks like a twig him who fears not his god. He tears asunder his veins like a castor-bean<sup>1</sup>.

"He crushes the flesh of him that has not a protecting goddess. The victim faints and swoons like a star of heaven, vanishes in the night as water.

## 2.

"He attacks in front mortal man and smites him instantly. He kills that man.

<sup>1</sup> Babelon (p. 203) renders: "Son ulcère l'opprime comme une entrave."

"The man writhes as one whose heart is being torn out. He tosses himself to and fro as one whose heart is taken away. He burns like a thing fallen into a great fire. His eyes are filled with darkness like a wild ass in agony.

"He is consumed in his soul, he clings to the dead.

"The Head-ache is like unto a great storm. None knoweth its path. No one knoweth its whole force, nor how long its assault lasteth<sup>1</sup>.

"This the god Maroudouk (lord or master of evil spirits) beholdeth. He betaketh him to his father Ia, enters his abode and saith: 'My father, Head-ache hath taken possession of this man.'

"Then he saith twice:

"'I know not what this man must do, nor by what means he will be healed.'

"Ia answered his son Maroudouk: 'My son, what knowest thou not? What wilt thou I should add unto thee? Maroudouk, what knowest thou not? What wilt thou I should still tell thee? That which I know thou knowest also.

"'Go, my son Maroudouk: gather a herb which grows apart by itself in a desert place. Cover thy head with a handkerchief so soon as the sun shall have entered into his dwelling. Then wrap up in it the herb and shut it up.

"'At dawn of day ere the sun rises, scatter it about in the place where the (sick man) is staying. Take the roots (of the plant), take also the wool of a young and virgin sheep. Wrap up in it the head of the sick man; wrap up in it the neck of the sick man. The Head-ache which dwells in the body of that man will depart at once; like a leaf that the wind carries away, it will not ever return to its place. Remember the oath of heaven. Remember the oath of earth.'"

In the last lines, says Halévy, the demon is exhorted to  
Halévy on its import. remember the oath which the demons took, probably at the time of their creation, to submit

<sup>1</sup> Babelon's version ends here.

to order and not harm any creature. The idea that the order of nature, of well-being, peace, health, rest on an oath of fealty, which from the first the gods imposed on all subordinate beings, and that all disorder and trouble is through their breaking of this oath (or covenant)—this idea was not only Babylonian, but forms the basis of Hebrew religion and of all the system of reward and punishment found in the prophets and psalmists.

The same writer remarks that the Semitic symbolism of bodily and moral purity finds significant expression in the wool of the innocent lamb wrapped round the head of the sinner whom his protecting deities have abandoned to the fury of the demon.

Babelon has some just remarks about the incantation just quoted. When, he says, the demons have Functions of the god to be driven away, the exorcism takes on a Êa and of dramatic character. After a description of the Marduk. ravages caused by the evil spirit, it supposes that Silik-mulu-hi has heard the complaint. But his power and knowledge are not enough to overcome so powerful a demon. So he addresses his father Êa, the divine intelligence which pervades the universe, the master of the eternal secrets, the god who presides over theurgic acts and reveals the mysterious rite, the formula or the all-powerful and hidden name which will break down the most formidable powers of the abyss.

The same author remarks (p. 202) that in delivering a person possessed from the evil demon, it was Good spirits must replace evil ones. usual to introduce into him after its exit a good or holy spirit, as the surest way of preventing the evil spirit from returning.

For want of such a precaution the evil spirit in the Gospels came back along with seven others. In Recurrence of the number seven. the Sumerian formulae the number seven plays a great part. The formulae which make up an incantation are commonly seven in number and must be repeated seven times. The spirits invoked are also seven,

like the seven angels which stood before God in Revelation; and in the magic formulae printed by Prof. Sayce at the end of his *Hibbert Lectures* the demons present themselves time after time in groups of seven. The recurrence of the number seven in the New Testament is noteworthy. There are not only seven evil spirits and seven spirits of God, but seven churches in Asia, seven stars as their angels, seven deacons, seven seals, seven sons of Sceva the Jew seven loaves among five thousand, seven baskets of fragments from their feast, seven husbands in succession of one wife, seven nations in Canaan. We may well suspect as mythical any narrative in which things go by sevens.

Just as St. Paul delivered over unto Satan the blasphemers Hymenaeus and Alexander, so also the old Assyrian sorcerer let loose the demons against his enemies, provoked their possession by demons and sent sickness upon them. He could even compass their death by his drawing of lots and imprecations (Babelon, p. 208). Like Origen's demons those of ancient Assyria had outward forms and were so ugly that if you made an image of them and held it up they would often flee, affrighted at their own image (Babelon, p. 212). Our museums contain specimens of such images. An image of a benevolent demon, especially of Silik-mulu-hi, had the same apotropaeic virtue as has to-day a statue of Christ or of the Virgin or the mere representation of the Cross; and Babelon (p. 210) gives a formula for driving out the demon of fever by such a device. Purified and enchanted waters had a similar effect, like the sprinklings or *περιρραντήρια* and baptismal rites of the Greeks, Essenes, Christians and Hindoos.

Prof. Sayce in his *Hibbert Lectures* gives the same account of the Demonology of ancient Assyria as the authors already quoted. "All sickness," he says<sup>1</sup>, "was ascribed by the Assyrians to demoniacal

Chaldean  
form of  
Traditio  
Satanae.

Chaldean  
devils had  
outward  
form.

Sayce on  
Assyrian  
Demonology.

<sup>1</sup> *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 310.

possession—the demon had been eaten with the food, or drunk with the water, or breathed in with the air, and until he could be expelled there was no chance of recovery.”

This belief Sayce<sup>1</sup> terms Shamanism and defines Shamanism. it as Animism controlled and regulated by a body of exorcists or medicine-men “who take the place of the priesthood of a higher cult.”

The prevention and cure of disease was the main object of the magical texts and incantations. And very characteristic are the opening words, as rendered by Sayce, of the great collection of Chaldaean magical texts :—

“The evil god, the evil demon, the demon of the field, the demon of the sea, the demon of the tomb, the evil spirit, the dazzling fiend, the evil wind, the assaulting wind which strips off the clothing of the body like an evil demon,—conjure, O spirit of heaven! conjure, O spirit of earth! . . . . That which is misformed, that which is diseased, that which is racked (with pain), even a diseased muscle, a swollen muscle, an aching muscle, a broken muscle, an injured muscle,—conjure, O spirit of heaven! conjure, O spirit of earth. . . .

“The painful fever, the virulent fever, the fever which quits not a man, the fever-demon who leaves not (the body), . . . . Conjure, O spirit of heaven! conjure, O spirit of earth!”

In these texts, then, we recognize most of the diseases, mental and moral, healed by the name or authority of Christ. There are demons of the tomb, of the field, of the mountain, of the sea and wind, the demon of disused muscle, of broken blood-vessels, of the evil mouth, of the evil tongue, of fever; and as in Luke's Gospel (viii. 27) the possessed had for a long time worn no clothing, so here we read that the demon stripped its unfortunate victim of his clothing<sup>2</sup>.

Its affinity  
with the  
beliefs of  
the N. T.

<sup>1</sup> *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 329.

<sup>2</sup> A Scotch writer, Mr. Colin Campbell, in his *Critical Studies in St. Luke's*

All these lesser and malignant demons the old Assyrian exorcist drove out in the name of the great cosmogonist spirits, who were essentially beneficent. "The ceremonies," writes Sayce<sup>1</sup> (described in the Assyrian ritual texts), ".... were not so much a communion with the deities of heaven as an attempt to compel them by particular rites and words to relieve the worshipper from trouble, or to bestow upon him some benefit. Divine worship, in short, was a performance rather than an act of devotion, and upon the correctness of the performance depended entirely its efficacy. The mispronunciation of a single word, the omission to tie a knot at the right moment, would invalidate the whole ceremony. The ritual, therefore, was a sort of acted magic."

Assyrian  
worship  
was acted  
magic.

### *Evidence of Zoroastrianism.*

In laying before my reader this evidence I must beg him to excuse its second-hand character. The Parsi sacred books of this faith have survived among the Parsis of India, the sole modern upholders of the Fire-worship which originated in Media many centuries B.C. and spread over Persia some generations before Cyrus. They are written partly in an old Iranian dialect akin both to Vedic Sanscrit and to the old Persian in which Darius dictated his inscriptions of Behistan, and partly in Pehlevi, or the middle Persian used in the third and following centuries of our era. Their evidence is only accessible to me through the translations of Darmesteter, West and Mills, and the works of Dr. Wilhelm Geiger, Franz Spiegel, Madame Ragozin, and others.

According to this religion a division into good and

*Gospel*, 1891, p. 94, has noticed this and other points of resemblance between the old Assyrian beliefs and the New Testament.

<sup>1</sup> *Hibbert Lectures*, p. 319.



evil runs through the whole universe of things visible and invisible. Ahura Mazda, the ultimately supreme god, heads a phalanx of good spirits, human and superhuman. Against his kingdom of light is arrayed a counter one of darkness and evil, headed by Angra Manyu, the mediaeval Ahriman, prince of the powers of the air and of night. The latter, through his demons, causes death and disease, droughts, and all convulsions of nature. The demons, if male, are called Daiva; if female, Druj. Every good demon is opposed and thwarted by a corresponding bad one; and among the evil ones may be noticed Aishma, the demon of sudden anger, who appears in the book of Tobit as Aeshma Daeva or Asmodeus. There is also Bushyâsta, the demon of sleep. With the demon of anger we have already met in the Shepherd of Hermas, and with that of sleep in the Twelve Testaments.

Persian dualism does not seem to have been absolute in the sense that the counter principles of good and evil were represented as coeval. At any rate Angra Manyu is in some ways posterior to Ahura Mazda. He is not mentioned in the old Persian inscriptions of Darius and Cyrus; and his realm of evil spirits and evil things is later than the kingdom of good, of the blissful and immortal Amesha Spenta. The Zoroastrians believed the whole earth and air to be full of evil spirits, which attacked both men and animals, generally through the baleful enchantment of an apostate or a witch. Yet the demons could be driven out by certain formulae or health-giving sayings, repeated in the right way, as also by various talismans. And the kingdom of darkness was shaken from top to bottom by the appearance on earth of Zarathustra or Zoroaster, the prophet and friend of Ahura Mazda and revealer to men of his light and truth. This prophet's mission was to liberate man from the evil spirits, which possess the waste, dry, and waterless regions of the

Dualism of  
old Persian  
belief.

The good  
spirit was  
prior to  
the bad.

The saviour  
Zoroaster.

earth, and are ever seeking to ruin crops by drought or sowing tares, and so to render the whole land a desert incapable of supporting man. Likewise, as in Luke's Gospel and in the Appendix of Mark, so in the Avesta, all noxious animals and insects, snakes, scorpions, ants, flies, and the wolf—the counterpart and enemy of the domesticated dog—are creations of Angra Manyu or Ahriman and of his demons. Prior to the advent of Zarathustra, Ahriman had also created evil spirits in human form—Drujas, Pairikas, and Daevas; but after Zarathustra had once hallowed the human form by assuming the same, the supreme evil spirit lost his power of creating men-demons; he could thenceforth only injure man by causing in him various deformities. However, man in the exercise of his free will can still so fall from the good as even to become a daeva, especially after death.

For the soul is immortal and good spirits go to Paradise, crossing the bridge Chinvat which spans the wide water into the heaven of light, where Ahura Mazda and his angels welcome them. But the souls of the bad cannot cross the bridge, because evil spirits hinder them and the demon of death drags them down in fetters into hell.

But, as in the New Testament, so in the Avesta, the reign of Angra Manyu does not last for ever. At the final dissolution of things a new earth arises purged of demonic agencies; and in the last Judgment and final triumph of Ahura Mazda and his angels the evil spirits with their leader will be condemned and destroyed for ever.

The Avesta creed is so similar in all its essentials to that of Christianity, that James Darmesteter in his last work tried to cast upon it the suspicion of having been influenced thereby. It is true that the existing recension of the Parsi Scriptures cannot be earlier than the Sassanide revival of Magism in

The crea-  
tures of  
Angra  
Manyu.

Fate of the  
soul.

Final  
triumph of  
good over  
evil.

Resemblance  
of Zoroastri-  
anism to  
Christianity.

the third century A. D. Yet their substance is much earlier, and Christianity is itself rather the debtor than the creditor of early Persian religion in all that concerns Demonology. The New Testament belief in evil spirits and in their final suppression by a Messiah contains much that is racy of the Persian soil alone.

*Evidence of Folklore in general.*

To try to outline the demonological beliefs of Hindoos, of Buddhists, or of the less civilized races which represent to us to-day the primitive man of a remote past is impossible. The material is too vast. All that I shall attempt is to illustrate from them some points in the New Testament.

1. Let us begin with the well-known miracle of Gadara, in which the legion of devils passed into a herd of swine. I have already given examples from classic sources of disease demons being induced to leave a human being by the provision for them of another host. Let me add two instances from savage life out of the many with which folklorists have provided us.

"In the island of Nias (in New Guinea)," writes Mr. Frazer (*Golden Bough*, 1890, Vol. II, p. 160), "when a man is seriously ill, and other remedies have been tried in vain, the sorcerer proceeds to exorcize the devil who is causing the illness. A pole is set up in front of the house, and from the top of the pole a rope of palm leaves is stretched to the roof of the house. Then the sorcerer mounts the roof with a pig, which he kills and allows to roll from the roof to the ground. The devil, anxious to get the pig, lets himself hastily from the roof by the rope of palm leaves; and a good spirit, invoked by the sorcerer, prevents him from climbing up again."

with substitution of  
a good spirit.

The idea, of course, is that the evil spirit passes into the

pig out of the sick man; and the substitution of a good spirit for a bad belongs to the same order of ideas as we have already met with in the Latin rite of baptism, except that in the latter the priest blows out the evil one instead of tempting it out with a pig.

Here is another example. In the Western Himalayas the people take a dog, intoxicate him with spirits and bhang or hemp, and having fed him with sweetmeats, lead him round the village and let him loose. They then chase and kill him with sticks and stones; and believe that, when they have done so, no disease or misfortune will visit the village during the year.

In this instance the dog is a scapegoat, which the Gadarene swine, strictly speaking, were not. But the underlying idea is the same, namely, that the evil spirits will go into the newly-provided host and leave the old.

It is not always needful even to provide a living host.

For the demon also admits of being transferred into a rag or a paste of clay laid on the part afflicted and subsequently removed. We have examples of such cures in the New Testament<sup>1</sup>, as where Jesus spat on the ground and made clay of the spittle to anoint the eyes of a blind man withal. Similar cures were common in antiquity. In the *Satyricon* of Petronius Arbiter, for example, a writer of Nero's age, a witch makes a cake of clay with her spittle, anoints a young man affected with some weakness on the forehead and instantly cures him<sup>2</sup>.

Frazer, in his *Golden Bough*<sup>3</sup>, relates how the Incas of Peru banished sickness from their country by rubbing their entire persons with a paste made of maize kneaded with the blood of children. They did this, he says, in order that the paste might take away all their infirmities.

<sup>1</sup> John ix. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Satyricon*, ch. 131: "Mox turbatum sputo pulverem medio sustulit digito, frontemque repugnantis signat."

<sup>3</sup> Vol. II, p. 167.

A similar cure is related by Tacitus<sup>1</sup> on the faith of Vespasian's informants who witnessed it. In the year 70 A.D. miracle. the Emperor Vespasian was in Alexandria, and one of the natives, notoriously blind, prayed him to cure his blindness by deigning to smear with his spittle his cheeks and eyeballs. For the god Serapis in a dream had bidden him seek this remedy. Vespasian consulted with his advisers and with the medical men, and ended by doing as the blind man besought him to. "Statim . . . caeco reluxit dies," at once the day-star shone once more for the blind man. As a rule the disease preferred to pass out into a medium similar to that from which it was expelled. For example, a cure for tooth-ache was to tie two snakes' teeth to one's neck, upper or lower teeth as the pain was in the upper or lower jaw. A tooth torn from a live mole was also effective as a cure, if bound to the aching jaw<sup>2</sup>.

In the presence of such analogous cures, who will pretend that Jesus did not entertain the same conception of the causes of blindness and other diseases as the Incas of Peru, or the Alexandrians, "dedita superstitionibus gens," as Tacitus calls them in connexion with Vespasian's miracle?

2. In Matt. xii. 44<sup>3</sup> the unclean spirit walks through

<sup>1</sup> *Hist.* iv. 81.

<sup>2</sup> Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxx. 8. The same author relates that a popular remedy for a cold in the head was to kiss the nostrils of a mule (xxx. 11). Numerous uses of human spittle are recorded by Pliny, e. g. that of a man fasting was a cure for snake bite (*Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 7). You spat in presence of an epileptic by way of rejecting the disease and expelling it from yourself (ibid.). This was why men spat in the presence of St. Paul. We know therefrom that he was an epileptic. Pliny (ibid.) also tells us that you could heal a man's ophthalmia by anointing his eyes with your spittle early in the morning. Bloodshot eyes were healed by the spittle of a fasting woman (ibid. xxviii. 22).

<sup>3</sup> What is the bearing on the context of Matt. xii. 43-45? What had Jesus in mind in uttering these words? It has been suggested to me by Mr. H. A. L. Fisher, that some demon which Jesus had cast out had returned and retaken possession of the person from whom it had been expelled. Then Jesus had been taxed with this apparent failure of his exorcistic powers, and these verses 43-45 are his answer to his accusers. In

waterless places, when he is gone out of a man. Finding no rest there, he decides to return into his house from whence he came out; "and when he is come he findeth it empty, swept and garnished. Then he takes seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and the last state of that man is worse than the first."

Canon Gore, anxious to clear the teaching of Jesus Christ with regard to demons from the imputation of containing "Elements of Superstition," declares that in the above passage he is "plainly speaking in metaphor." The "waterless places," he writes, through which the demon walks are as metaphorical as "the empty, swept and garnished house" of the soul (*Dissertations*, i. § 3). If Mr. Gore had been familiar with the demonology of that age and of ages before and after it, he could not have so written. For, in the first place, it is notorious that of old, as still among races that believe in them, the demons inhabited the desert and ruins; and all apotropaic ritual was intended to coax or drive off demons from the fertile and inhabited haunts of man into the desert. Hence the scapegoat was sent into the wilderness; the demoniac in Luke viii. 29 was driven by the evil spirit into the desert, and Asmodeus in the book of Tobias fled, pursued by the angel, into the utmost parts of Egypt, which were desert. Then as to the "house empty, swept and garnished," there is no reason to suppose that by it is meant the man's soul, or rather body, out of which the first devil went forth. For when a man was exorcized, the house he lived in was carefully swept out to make sure that the demon did not continue to lurk in it.

Mr. Frazer (*Golden Bough*, p. 164 foll.) gives many them he lays the blame on the wickedness of that generation. The verses or verse in which his failure was alleged would probably have been erased from the text of the Gospel as being derogatory to the Son of God. No cure of his could be partial or imperfect.

examples of such a custom. Thus the Eskimo of Alaska, when they periodically hunt out the demons from their houses, brush their clothes, violently calling on the spirits to leave them. The Incas of Peru (p. 169) "shook their clothes as if they were shaking off dust, while they cried 'Let the Evils be gone.'" So the ancient Athenians at the close of the feast of Anthesteria, during which the souls of the dead rose up and were fed and walked about the city, swept out their houses, crying *Thuraze kéres*<sup>1</sup>, "begone, ye demons," i. e. of death or disease. The Incas washed themselves in running water to get rid of the demons, and the same idea underlies baptism. In most ancient languages to hallow or consecrate was to *cleanse* from impure spirits. On the Gold Coast (Frazer, p. 170) the women wash and scour all their wooden and earthen vessels "to free them from all uncleanness and the devil." Among the Hindus (ibid. p. 176), at the close of the festival of lamps, at which the souls of ancestors are believed to visit the house, the oldest woman of the family takes all the sweepings and rubbish of the family and throws them out, with the words: "Let all dirt and wretchedness depart from here and all good fortune come in." In the Greek islands to this day you must not sweep out a sick man's house, lest you sweep out his soul, and he lose it for good<sup>2</sup>. For sickness is conceived of as the temporary absence of the soul from the body. And this fear of sweeping out the soul of one still living by mistake is met with all over the earth. Now as you are careful not to sweep out a man's soul so you are careful to sweep out demons, which are similar in their composition. Porphyry, we saw, believed that

<sup>1</sup> So Ovid, *Fasti* v. 442, relates how at the close of the Lemuria festival the householders after feeding the shades dismissed them:

"Et rogat ut tectis exeat umbra suis.

Quum dixit novies: Manes exite paterni."

On the whole subject see Rohde, *Psyche*, ed. 1890, p. 219; and Tylor, *Prim. Cult.* ii. 181, 182.

<sup>2</sup> I owe this detail to Mr. W. R. Paton.

houses are full of demons, which must be driven out of a room or a building before it is used for worship; and Eusebius quoted his opinion on this as on other points with approval. The consecration of a church or burial-ground reposes on such a belief.

Thus the probable meaning of Matthew's text becomes clear. It may actually have been the man's house which was swept and garnished, and not his person or body at all. After expelling the demon from a man's body you would also sweep his house out to make quite sure that the spirit was gone. Having lived in the man, the spirit had also tenanted his house, which he therefore speaks of as his own. And he returns to haunt it, much to the inconvenience and distress of its human proprietor. Yet it may be true that the term house (*οἶκος*) really means the man himself in this passage; just as in Rom. viii. 11 Paul speaks of the Spirit as making his house (*ἐνοικοῦν*) in our mortal bodies (cp. 2 Cor. vi. 16). But even if this be so, we must still see in such phraseology a reference to the superstitious habit of purifying a bewitched house to get rid of demons. And there is no reason for supposing that Jesus did not believe in the language of current demonology which he here as everywhere else employs. It is a hopeless task to try to pick and choose in the New Testament, to accept all we can take literally and then to coolly explain away the rest.

3. It will startle many orthodox persons to be told that Storm-  
demons Jesus Christ believed the winds and waves to be evil demons. That it should be so is only a proof of the extent to which rationalism has eaten into the heart of their religion; at the same time it proves the emptiness of the orthodox commentators on the Gospels, to understand which we must become, if not as little children, at least sympathetic with the simple-minded orientals who wrote them and for whom they were written.

In Mark iv. 39 we read, in the account of the stilling



of the storm, that Jesus "awoke and rebuked the wind, and <sup>in the</sup> said unto the sea, 'Peace, be still.' And the <sup>Gospels.</sup> wind ceased, and there was a great calm." But here the Revised Version, which we quote, seems of set purpose to have blurred the sense of the Greek text, which really means the following: "he rebuked the wind and said unto the sea, Be silent, be muzzled. And the wind grew weary," &c. Here the entire phraseology is demonological. "He rebuked" (*epetimā*) is the regular word used to describe Jesus' way of addressing evil spirits. It is not a very common word in the New Testament, yet in five other cases it is so used, not reckoning the parallel narratives to this of Matthew and Luke, who both use it. Then come the words, "Be silent, be muzzled" (*pephimōso*). Mark uses the latter word but once elsewhere, in i. 25, where we read that Jesus rebuked (*epetimēsen*) the unclean spirit, saying, Be muzzled (*phimōthēti*), and go forth out of him. There can be no question in what light Mark regarded the incident, and Matthew and Luke by using the same word "rebuked" also assent to this interpretation of it. Nor are there wanting those among the early fathers who took the passage in such a sense. Ephrem Syrus, though he wrote in the fourth century, <sup>Ephrem Syrus believed in them.</sup> more than any other father of that age reflects the tone of Palestine in the first and second centuries, probably because he was a Syrian and not a Greek. In his Commentary on the Diatessaron he thus writes about the incident: "What authority, what benevolence is here displayed by Jesus! For see here, it submits through his force. That our Lord silenced these (elements) that were not his own—namely, the winds of the sea and those devils withal—thereby he showed that he is son of the Creator." Ephrem, then, regarded the winds and waves as having been demons and alien to Jesus. And so did the Apostles who marvelled that the wind and sea obeyed him. The word *hupakouō*, here translated "obey," is in all the three Synoptics, and Mark only uses it once

elsewhere (i. 27), and then of unclean spirits submitting to Jesus.

Here, then, we have most fully illustrated in the Gospels that primitive animism which invests the elements with life and turns winds and waves into demonic agencies.

Kindred So the Assyrians had their wind- and tempest-beliefs of Old demons; and Babelon<sup>1</sup> figures an image of the Assyrians, demon of the South-West wind preserved in the Louvre. It is a horrible demon, erect, with lion's claws, a scorpion's tail, wings of an eagle, and body of a dog; while the head is a dead skull with the flesh half torn off, with goat's horns over the eyes. At the top of the head is a ring by which it was hung up at a door or window to scare away by its own ugliness the very demon which it represented.

So the ancient Persians also had their wind-demons, and of Persians, Origen, as we saw above, expressly sets down Latins, and to their malice the storms which wrecked Arabs, mariners. The Romans had their wind-god, Aeolus, to whom they raised altars even as they did to Πυρερός, the fever-demon. Herodotus<sup>2</sup> relates how in the land of the Psylli, the modern Tripoli, the Simoom had dried up the water-tanks. Whereupon the people took counsel and marched in a body to make war on the South wind. Mr. Frazer, to whose work on the *Golden Bough* I owe this reference, gives many similar cases. The Bedouins of East Africa stab with drawn creeses the centre of a dust-storm as it sweeps across the path, in order to drive away the evil spirit that is believed to be riding on the blast. When the Eskimos want a calm and of Eskimos, respite from North-Westerly winds, they light a fire, chant and invite the demon of the wind to come under the fire and warm himself. As soon as he arrives

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. Anc.*, ed. 1887, p. 213.

<sup>2</sup> iv. 173; Aul. Gell. xvi. 11. Xenophon (*Anab.* iv) relates how he and his soldiers appeased the fury of Boreas on the Armenian uplands by sacrificing a victim thereto.

they throw water on the fire to extinguish it, and shoot arrows into the spot where it burned and where the demon is supposed to be still sitting. We find similar beliefs all over the world, and even to-day winds are sold by old women in Lerwick in North Britain just as they are in Mediterranean ports. In old Christian art we meet with the same belief. For example, in the Taylor Gallery in Oxford an old Italian picture (No. 15) depicts the rescue of a storm-tossed ship and crew by Nicholas of Myra, who comes flying through the sky in response to the mariner's prayer; while the storm-demon, not unlike a nereid, makes off through the waves at his approach<sup>1</sup>.

4. I have already referred to the descent of the Holy Spirit as a dove. In Luke's Gospel it is in the Hebrew Gospel it not merely alighted on, but entered into, Jesus. Of course the theosophy of the Alexandrine Jews which chose the dove as symbol of the Divine Spirit had its part in the generation of this the central incident in the life of Jesus. Thus Philo compares the Human Reason and the Divine Word respectively to the domestic pigeon and the turtle-dove<sup>2</sup>. "For," says he, "the Word of God is fond of the desert and of solitude, not mixing with the throng of things which come to be and pass, but accustomed to roam and soar aloft." And elsewhere he says that "it is the property of the Divine Knowledge or Wisdom to roam aloft, like a bird; wherefore it was," he says, "symbolically called a turtle-dove<sup>3</sup>."

But underneath this comparison, already common among Greek Jews in Philo's day, there lay the popular belief that the soul or reason or spirit of man is winged like a bird; for, as Tertullian says, every spirit, good and bad alike, had wings. We saw above how according

<sup>1</sup> See Mrs. Jameson's *Legendary Art*, vol. II, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> Philo, ed. Mangey, i. p. 590.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 506.

to the Pseudo-Pionius<sup>1</sup> a dove visited Polycarp preparatory to his consecration<sup>2</sup>, and how in the hour of his martyrdom his soul or spirit left his body as a dove. In strict accordance with such ideas, the Holy or Divine Spirit rested or,

The dove according to one account, entered into Jesus at  
was the his baptism as a dove, replacing his merely  
divine soul human soul. And this explains why in the  
entering earliest texts of the Gospels a voice was heard  
into Jesus.

from heaven on this occasion to say: "Thou art my beloved Son, this day have I *begotten* thee;" that is to say, "this day have I communicated to thee my spirit, soul or life." And immediately after the baptism Jesus, we read, was full of the Holy Ghost—as he had not been before—and was led thereby into the wilderness. Such was the earliest form of the story of the Baptism of Jesus. But in a later age, when the belief in the virgin birth and conception by the Holy Ghost had grown up, it became necessary to represent the Divine Soul or Spirit as having been in Jesus from birth. With this newer view the text "This day have I begotten thee" was not compatible; so it was changed in all copies of the New Testament into the words, "with thee am I well pleased."

Now this idea of a soul entering or leaving the body in the form of a bird is widespread. In the  
Other exam- in the form of a bird is widespread. In the  
ples of such *Odyssey* (xi. 222)<sup>3</sup> we read how at death the soul  
a belief: of a hero fluttered up like a bird and flew away.  
So in Plato's *Phaedrus* (p. 249) the soul has wings and feathers with which she soars upwards to the ruler of  
among Old the universe. And to the ancient Greek such  
Greeks, language was no metaphor, but expressed a serious belief. Mr. Frazer<sup>4</sup> draws our attention to many

<sup>1</sup> See Lightfoot's *Apostolic Fathers*, vol. I, p. 644, and vol. III, p. 390.

<sup>2</sup> Faustus, an Armenian author of the fourth century, relates the same story of the consecration of the patriarch Nerses.

<sup>3</sup> Ψυχὴ δ' . . . ἀποπταμένη πεπύθηται. The same belief comes in the *Iliad* xvi. 856, and xxii. 362.

<sup>4</sup> Vol. I, ch. ii. p. 124.

parallels in savage beliefs. When the Malays see a soul on among the wing in bird form they scatter rice to lure Malays, it back. In Java the first time an infant is set on the ground it is put in a hen-coop and the mother makes a clucking sound like a hen to keep the infant soul from straying. In the Celebes, a bridegroom's soul is apt to fly away at marriage, so coloured rice is scattered over him to induce it to stay, for it is imagined to be like a bird.

In Celtic mythology, says Mr. Whitley Stokes<sup>1</sup>, good among an- souls appear as white birds; e.g. in the middle cients Celts. Irish *Dá bron flatha nime* (Two sorrows of Heaven's kingdom), "Lebor na huidre," p. 17, and in the *Vision of Adamnan*, *ibid.* p. 31 b, the souls of the righteous come "in shape of pure white birds" to be taught by Eli under the tree of life. The souls of Mael Suthani's three pupils come to him "in shapes of three white doves" (O'Curry, *Lectures* 530). The souls of the wicked appear as ravens (Vita S. Paterni, Rees, *Cambro-British Saints*, Landov. 1853, p. 92). In Jacob Grimm's *Deutsche Mythologie*, Vierte Ausgabe, Bd. ii, p. 690, and Bd. iii, p. 246, are several examples from Old German, Bohemian, Polish, Arab, and other mythologies, of the soul appearing as a bird, especially as a dove. Hesychius gives the definition ψυχὴ πνεῦμα καὶ ζωῦφιον πτηνόν, i.e. the soul is a spirit and a little living thing with wings. Grimm (l. c.) gives an old Spanish

Other example of the soul being regarded as a butterfly examples. from a Roman tombstone: "M. Porcius M. haeredibus mando etiam cinere ut meo *volitet* ebrius *papilio*. Among the ancient Greeks the belief was so universal that Demosthenes, c. 50, says of the soul of a departed friend simply ἀπέπτη, "it flew away." In the old Egyptian mythology the sparrow-hawk with a human head repre-

<sup>1</sup> In *Revue Celtique*, tom. II, p. 200. Cp. also Prof. Rhys, *Hibbert Lectures*, pp. 240, 398-99. This writer also refers me to Wood Martin's *Pagan Ireland*, pp. 140, 141, for examples of human souls appearing as swans and butterflies.

sents the soul (Bunsen, *Dingbilder* 126). The Romans had the custom of letting fly an eagle from the funeral pyres of their emperors, probably to provide the kingly soul with a vehicle wherein to ascend to heaven. So Professor Rhys (l. c.) gives examples from old Celtic mythology of the conversion of souls into eagles.

5. I will take two more examples of the way in which the New Testament admits of illustration from popular superstitions. In Matt. xiii. 25 we read in the parable of how a man sowed good seed in his field. But while men slept his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. This parable must have appealed with twofold force to an audience that really believed the tares among their crops to be sown by night by evil spirits. In the old Persian religion the powers of darkness, which work by night and flee from the first rays of dawn and from the song of the chanticleer, sowed tares and weeds. And Mr. Frazer in his *Golden Bough* devotes many pages to the enumeration of spring and harvest customs, of which the object was to induce the spirits to furnish man with good crops and to deter the evil spirits from doing them harm.

6. In Matt. xvii. 20 Jesus reproves his disciples for the want of faith which prevented them from casting out the evil spirit from the epileptic boy, and he added these notable words: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." And in Luke xvii. 6 the logion takes this form: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye would say unto this sycamine tree, Be thou rooted up, and be thou planted in the sea; and it would have obeyed you." May not Jesus have held such language in view of the popular, and in that age almost universal, belief that by use of certain incantations and powerful names trees could be brought down off the mountain, hills removed, and even

Devils as  
sowers of  
tares.

Removal of  
trees and  
mountains  
by faith or  
magic.

the moon drawn down to earth? Thus Vergil writes in his eighth *Bucolic* :

Incipe Maenalios mecum, mea tibia, versus.  
Omnia vel medium fiant mare.

And again :

Carmina vel caelo possunt deducere Lunam.

So Ovid, *Metam.* xiv. 340, tells how the wife of Picus called Canens could move trees and rocks with her incantations, "*Silvas et saxa movere.*" Medea was believed to have done all this and to have enchained the torrent as well :

Illa refrenat aquas, obliquaque flumina sistit,  
Illa loco silvas, vivaque saxa movet.

Petronius Arbiter<sup>1</sup> in graceful verse has enumerated all the miracles which a witch could work :

Quidquid in orbe vides, paret mihi. Florida tellus  
Cum volo siccatis arescit languida succis . . .  
Mihi pontus inertes  
Submittit fluctus, Zephyrique tacentia ponunt  
Ante meos sua flabra pedes.

Seneca in his play "*Medea*"<sup>2</sup> attributes to his heroine similar miraculous powers. Everything obeys her incantations. In Claudian the witch says : "*Ire vagas quercus, et flumina stare coegi*"<sup>3</sup>.

Fruit trees and crops also could be withered and destroyed by magic incantations, as Tibullus says (*lib. i, Eleg. 8, 19*) :

Cantus vicinis fruges traducit ab agris.

And at Rome it was a provision of the XII Tables<sup>4</sup> "*ne quis fructus excantassit,*" that no one by charms should ruin another's fruit-crop. The influence of the evil eye, *fascinatio* as it was termed, prejudiced human beings, animals, and plants. In this wise Jesus cursed and so withered the fig-tree.

<sup>1</sup> Ch. 134.

<sup>2</sup> l. 752 foll.

<sup>3</sup> Lib. i. in *Rufin.*

<sup>4</sup> Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 4. He also was condemned "*qui malum earum excantassit.*"

Nor must we think that these beliefs were the fancies of poets. The fathers of the Church with one Such beliefs in power of magic seriously held. accord believed that the magi or magicians by use of incantations and invocation of devils could work such miracles, nor would Lucian have ridiculed them so keenly had they not been objects of popular credulity. Nor is it so long since such things were believed in Europe; and a learned Jesuit, Martin Delrio, as late as 1600 in his *Disquisitionum Magicarum libri sex*, after citing the above passages from the Latin poets, gravely argues that they were no exaggeration of what witches and magicians with the help of the devil could do.

We shall be much in error if we suppose that a Syrian or Palestinian city in the age of Christ contained fewer credulous people for its size than did Cologne, where in the seventeenth century the disquisition of Martin was printed and read. It is evident to any one who compares the Jesus as arch-magician. leading marvels of the Gospels—the turning of water into wine, the walking on the sea, the withering of the fig-tree, the stilling of the storm, the feeding of the 5000, the raising of Lazarus and others—that it was the fixed aim of the earliest biographers of Jesus not only to prove that he fulfilled the predictions of the prophets and was therefore the promised Messiah, but equally to put him into successful competition with the leading popular magicians of the age. At his birth the magi came from the East to do homage, and when he grew up he had to excel them all in their own peculiar skill. He had to distance them on their own ground. Doubtless many devout minds in the present age would rather that this thaumaturgic element were not in the Gospels, and feel rightly that it impairs the true isolation and dignity of the central figure. However, we must be thankful for them as they are, and congratulate ourselves that in a document emanating from Syria in the first century the miracles are not more numerous and more striking than they are. It



was indeed very creditable to the Jews of Jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion, that they mostly refused to listen to the tale of the bodily resurrection. For it was a credulous age in which Herod's first thought was that Jesus was John the Baptist risen from the dead, and in which even the Roman legions had to be set in motion in order to put down the insurrection of a sham Nero who equally with Jesus had risen from the dead, and was acclaimed as having done so by millions of Syrians. Resurrection in that last half of the first century was in the air; and the wonder is not that so many, but that so few believed from the first in the risen Christ.

7. One other point may be noticed, and that is the use in the Gospels of a phrase, borrowed directly from contemporary magic, namely "binding and loosing." Jesus said to Peter: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven<sup>1</sup>." And a little later<sup>2</sup>, he grants this power to the whole body of his disciples.

By incantations the ancient magicians or witches bound the elements, bound the feelings and wills of men, controlled their actions and movements, inflicted on them disease and even death. *Ligare* and *defigere* are the Latin equivalents. Thus the nurse in Seneca's play *Hercules Oetaeus*, l. 453, says: "Artibus magicis fere (? vaga) Coniugia nuptae precibus admistis ligant." And the same author (l. 6, *De Benef.* c. 35) has the phrase "caput alicuius dira imprecatione defigere." So Vergil in the *Ciris*, v. 377:

Regis Iolchiacis animum defigere votis.

Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 19 relates that the vestal virgins could by their prayers prevent a fugitive slave from quitting the city. By use of charms earthenware pots could

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xvi. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xviii. 18.

be broken<sup>1</sup>. Snakes, he says, would yield to the same influence, and houses could be burned down by incantations scrawled on their walls (*incendiorum deprecationibus*). In later Greek the Gospel word *δέω*, "I bind," regularly means "to enchant"; and Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. p. 23, preserves this inscription of Isis: "I am Isis, queen of all the land, and brought up by Hermes; and whatsoever I shall *bind*, no one is able to *loose*." And Aristides, in his oration for Bacchus, p. 53, says that "nothing can be so firmly *bound*, either by disease or anger or any fortune, as that Dionysus cannot loose it." This recalls Luke's phrase used of the woman who had a spirit of infirmity<sup>2</sup>. Satan had *bound* her for eighteen years. Symbolic knots were often used, especially in disease. Prof. Sayce points out in his *Hibbert Lectures* what importance attached to the tying and untying of these. Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* lib. xxviii) mentions a symbolic binding of the sick with linen. Witches, says Ovid<sup>3</sup>, and old women used magic knots in order to silence wicked tongues. In Somersetshire the peasants still tie symbolic knots on the back of a sick animal; and in the Pitt Rivers Museum at Oxford such a knot recently used is exhibited. Agabus the prophet, in Acts xxi. 11, in binding his hands and feet seems to have mystically compelled the fulfilment of his peculiar prophecy.

But I need not multiply instances. The words "bind and loose" signify any kind of occult influence gained by the use of the names of gods and demons, by spells sung, as Pliny remarks, in the ritual way without transposition or omission of a single word, amidst the reverential silence of the bystanders, and to the sound of a flute played without intermission, lest anything else but the words of the charm be heard by the supernatural powers<sup>4</sup>. We

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 4, "Nondum egressa urbe mancipia fugitiva retinere in loco precatone."

<sup>2</sup> Luke xiii. 16.

<sup>3</sup> *Fasti*, ii. 575, 581.

<sup>4</sup> Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxviii. 3.

can hardly doubt that the choice of the phrase "binding and loosing" to describe the power conferred by Jesus was suggested by these magic arts. The association with the magic use of the name—which I sha'll presently discuss—at least suggests that the power itself as originally conceived was simply of a theurgic or magical kind.

*(To be concluded.)*

F. C. CONYBEARE.

**Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania**

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Christian Demonology. IV

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## CHRISTIAN DEMONOLOGY.

## IV.

IN the discussion of certain salient problems, suggested by the data already before us, with which I shall conclude, I shall try to repeat as little as I can of the evidence already adduced. To this final discussion, therefore, I now pass.

1. And the first problem is that of the use of the name.

Problem of the use of the name. Why did Jesus instruct his disciples to cast out demons in his *name*? Why do we end our prayers with the formula "in the *name* of Jesus Christ our Lord"? Why did the Christians glory in the *name*? Why were they persecuted for the *name*? The answer to all these questions is furnished by ancient magic.

The magical use of a name as revealed in the many examples I have given from Origen, Celsus, Lucian, Porphyry and the papyri, is in all respects the same as was the use among the ancient Babylonians over 3000 years before Christ. "Like all primitive peoples," writes Prof. Sayce<sup>1</sup>, "the Chaldaeans confounded the person and the name by which he was known. The name in fact was the personality, and whatever happened to the name would happen to the personality. When<sup>2</sup> the gods lost their names they lost their individual personality as well. Injury<sup>3</sup> could be done to a person by using his name in a spell, and, similarly, to pronounce the name of a deity

<sup>1</sup> Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, IV, p. 302.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 305.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. p. 302.

compelled him to attend to the wishes of the priest or exorcist . . . The sacredness attached to the name of the God of Israel among the later Jews, and the frequent employment of the name for the person of the Lord, bear witness to the fact (viz. that the same superstition was deeply imprinted on the Semitic mind)."

"The preservation of their names," remarks the same writer<sup>1</sup>, "was a matter about which the kings of Babylonia and Assyria were especially anxious. Terrible curses are enacted against those who should destroy or injure the writing of their names, and substitute their own names instead."

This is a point which in the consideration of old historical documents must not be forgotten. We often find that in old historical records everything in the way of action and incident is freely changed by successive scribes, except lists of names. These are more faithfully handed down than anything else. We may be sure that there was a superstitious scruple as well as a political dislike at work in the erasure from monuments of a name like that of Commodus and the substitution of one less ill-omened.

"Closely<sup>2</sup> connected with the mystical importance thus assigned to names, was the awe and dread with which the curse or excommunication was regarded. Once uttered with the appropriate ceremonies, the binding of knots and the invocation of divine names, it was a spell which even the gods were powerless to resist."

Nor was this belief confined to Semitic races. "The whole Aryan family," says Prof. Rhys<sup>3</sup>, "believed at one time, not only that his name was part of a man, but that it was the part of him which is termed the soul, the breath of life."

Now the use of the name Jesus Christ in prayers and exorcisms is based on the same belief in a mysterious con-

<sup>1</sup> Sayce, *Hibbert Lectures*, IV, p. 304.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 305.

<sup>3</sup> Rhys on "Welsh Fairies," *Nineteenth Century*, Oct. 1891, p. 566.

nexion and almost identity between the name and the person named which Origen explicitly insists upon—appealing to Aristotle in support of his belief. The Christians invoked Jesus against the demons and he came, and from his presence, all unseen, like their own, they fled. Nor only this. Jesus had possessed a peculiar divine power or *dunamis*, which entered into him at baptism and which, according to the Gospel of Peter, and to many other early sources, left him when about to die. This power was along with the name of Christ and with baptism into that name mystically communicated to the believer. To invoke the name was to summon the power indissolubly bound up therewith, to invest ourselves therewith, to become one with it and gain at least for the nonce a control over the unseen world such as the Messiah possessed. So the use of a demon's name, according to Tertullian<sup>1</sup>, however empty and fictitious it might be, yet brought in an instant to your aid the demon or unclean spirit, if you intoned it in a superstitious spirit; such was the binding power over the spirit of a holy name.

The modern Abyssinian believes in the demons being constantly on the watch to steal if they can a Christian's baptismal name<sup>2</sup>. His idea of course is that the demons will use the stronger names to work their own evil ends. In baptism a mystical union with Jesus and communication of his powers to the worshipper was effected by calling over him the holy name.

If we examine the passages in the New Testament in which the word *name* is used, we shall find  
 In the N. T. the name = the personality. that they imply on the part of the writers this belief in a mysterious connexion between the name and the personality or power of the named.  
 Thus we read Matt. vii. 22, "Many will say unto me in

<sup>1</sup> *De Idololat.*, ch. 15: "Utique scimus, licet nomina inania atque conficta sint, cum tamen in superstitionem deducuntur, rapere ad se daemonia et omnem spiritum immundum per consecrationis obligamentum."

<sup>2</sup> Lejean, *Voyage en Abyssinie*, p. 78.

that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy by thy *name*? and by thy *name* cast out devils? and by thy *name* work many powers?" The allusion is to false prophets, to whom Jesus will reply: I never knew you. But though corrupt in their fruits it is clear that by the mere use of the name of the Lord Jesus they would achieve supernatural results; just as in Mark ix. 38, John informed Jesus that he had seen an unbeliever casting out devils in Jesus' *name*. It is clear that such a use of Jesus' name was identical with the use of the names of Jewish patriarchs in magical incantations; and, accordingly, in magical recipes we find the name of Jesus Christ juxtaposed with the tetragrammaton, with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and even with heathen deities. Of such juxtaposition I will give a single instance<sup>1</sup>: "Here is a goodly gift of Apsyrtus, a saving remedy, wonderfully effective for cattle. IAO, IAE, in the name of father and of our Lord Jesus Christ and holy spirit, iriterli estather, nochthai brasax, Salolam nakarzeo masa areons daron charael aklanathal aketh thruth tou malath poumedoin chthon chthon litiotan mazabates maner opsakion, aklanathalila iao, iae in the name of father and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the holy spirit. And write the same with a brass pencil on a clean smooth plate of tin." To return to the New Testament<sup>2</sup>: "Where two or three are gathered together into my name, there am I in the midst of them." Here the use of the name actually brings the power named into the circle of worshippers, or, as Tertullian says: "rapit ad se daemonem per consecrationis obligamentum." "And on Simon he laid the name Petros, and on James and John the name Boanerges, or Sons of Thunder." The new names were supposed to impart to them new qualities or fortify their moral characters, or even to protect them from the evil demons which would, by a change of name, be thrown off the track. Such a change almost certainly had a mystical import like the change of Abram

<sup>1</sup> Cp. *Incantation from Hippicr.*, p. 128, c. 1206, ap. Ric. Heim, l. c.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xviii. 20.



into Abraham. It is still a belief among Jews that you can save a sick man's life by changing his name. The new name makes him another person, and presumably the Angel of Death is baffled and unable to identify him. For a somewhat similar reason on the occasion of a public purification at Rome persons with lucky names (*prospera nomina*) were selected to lead the victims to the altars<sup>1</sup>.

A convert to the Latin church receives, I believe, a new name, often that of his guardian angel or patron saint. In this way he not only dodges the devils, but acquires as well the prestige, power, and protection of the superior name<sup>2</sup>. Philo relates how an unbeliever who scoffed at the extra letter which God in his goodness added to Abram's name was struck down with death for his blasphemy.

We read in the account of the Essenes given in Josephus<sup>3</sup> Parallel Es- that they had a secret knowledge of the *names* sene belief. of the angels, which members of the brotherhood swore not to divulge. Their congeners, the Therapeutae of Alexandria, who occupied themselves with the mystical interpretation of Old Testament names, had among themselves a faculty of healing superior to that which is practised in cities. This perhaps means that they invoked holy names in order to heal the sick.

And this interpretation of Old Testament names in a half-etymological, half-mystical manner, was a chief occupation of Philo, who never wearies of telling his readers that in all Scripture names are contained wondrously beautiful conceptions and hidden meanings; and though he does not regard names after the superstitious manner of his age, yet it was no doubt the prevalent belief in the

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, *Nat. Hist.*, XXVIII, 5.

<sup>2</sup> In the excerpts of Theodotion, ch. 22, who wrote in the last half of the second century, we have an allusion to this custom: ἵν' ἡ βεβαπτισμένος ὁ τὴν λύτρωσιν κομισάμενος τῷ αὐτῷ ὀνόματι, ᾧ καὶ ὁ ἄγγελος αὐτοῦ προβεβάπτισται: "That he who has won redemption may have been baptized with the same name with which was baptized before him his guardian angel." This reference, with much other matter, I owe to Dr. P. Ruben.

<sup>3</sup> Jos., *B. J.*, II, 142.

efficacy of names which led him to attach so much importance to the allegorical exposition of their meanings.

The disciples then were to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost<sup>1</sup>. . . That is to say, by means of the theurgic invocation in baptism, the fullness and power of the triple Godhead was to be communicated to the believer and dwell in him; as it had dwelt bodily in Jesus. "By my name shall they cast out devils, speak with tongues, take up serpents, lay hands on the sick<sup>2</sup>," and so forth. Such a use as this, was, as I have already pointed out, purely magical and theurgic. It was not only a way of introducing the pure spirit and of banishing the impure. It was also a subsidy against the noxious reptiles that in the old Persian religion were the special creations and instruments of Angra Manyu.

"Blessed are ye when men shall hate you . . . and cast out your *name* as evil, for the son of man's sake<sup>3</sup>." This seems to imply not the mere erasure of a name from records, but its exorcism as in itself a sinister power. As in the case of the ancient Assyrians, so here the mere erasure of the name was tantamount to annulling the owners' power and personality.

"He gave the right to become children of God to them that believe in his *name*" (*ἐἰς τὸ ὄνομα*)<sup>4</sup>; i. e. the power of Jesus and his authority over the seen and unseen worlds of men and spirits was bound up with his name.

"Whatsoever ye shall ask in my *name* ye shall receive it"<sup>5</sup>; i. e. because the authority of Jesus was irresistible. "I manifested thy *name*," says Jesus addressing the Father<sup>6</sup>. "Holy Father, keep them in thy *name* which thou hast given to me . . . I guarded them and not one of them perished . . . I made known unto them thy *name*, and will make it known; that the love wherewith thou lovedst me may be in them, and I in them<sup>7</sup>." So the Jews believed

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> Mark xvi. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Luke vi. 22.

<sup>4</sup> John i. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. xiv. 14.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. xvii. 6 and 11.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. xvii. 26.

that Jesus had gained a knowledge of the mysterious and not to be divulged name of God, and in that manner acquired his supernatural powers.

"By what *power* or in what *name* have ye done this<sup>1</sup>?" is the question put by the priests to Peter, who had cured the man who was lame from his mother's womb. And it was a question which could only have been asked by people conversant and themselves imbued with the belief in the magical efficacy of names. And Peter in reply quotes no doubt the full title, the use of which had effected the cure. "Be it known unto you all, that *by the name* of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by this *name* doth this man stand here before you whole<sup>2</sup>." . . . "For," adds Peter, "there is no other *name* under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved<sup>3</sup>." And just below the faithful pray to God that signs and wonders may be done "through the *name* of thy holy servant Jesus."

Gallio did not care about names any more than Lucian, but his words to the Jews<sup>4</sup>: "If these be Gallio on names. questions about words and *names* and your own law," betray his knowledge of the magical use of names among the natives of his province. They might flog their evil spirits with any names they chose, so long as their quarrel about what name was most efficacious did not lead to overt breaches of the *pax Romana*. It was a matter for the Jews to settle among themselves whether demons were to be expelled by one name rather than by another. His court could not decide a point so metaphysical. Jesus, we read in Hebrews<sup>5</sup>, had inherited a more excellent *name* than the angels, and so become by so much better than they, as to sit down on the right hand of God. God, we read in the same epistle<sup>6</sup>, "is not unrighteous to forget the love which ye showed toward his

<sup>1</sup> Acts iv. 7.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. iv. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid. iv. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. xviii. 15.

<sup>5</sup> Heb. i. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. vi. 10.

*name*, in ministering to the saints." Love of the name was equivalent to love of the spirit called by the name. "This *name* was above every name that is named, one in which every knee should bend<sup>1</sup>."

"Many shall come in my *name*," says Jesus, "saying I am the Christ<sup>2</sup>." A passage which indicates that it was the Messianic authority or name to which these pretenders would lay claim. The same identification of name with person is instanced in such a phrase as meets us in Acts i. 15: "There was a multitude gathered together of *names* about 120." So in Apocal. iii. 4: "Thou hast a few *names* in Sardis which did not defile their garments."

The same identification of name with object or person named is wide spread among savages, one of Similar be- named is wide spread among savages, one of  
liefs of whom will tell you anything sooner than his  
savages. name; because to know his name is to have  
a hold over him; since it gives you a faculty of using him  
and his personality. Therefore in Arabic tales the first  
thing to do with a ginn or spirit is to find out his name,  
as a preliminary to availing yourself of his power. Thus  
it is that in old Georgian, *Sakheli*, the word for name,  
means, that which gives power.

The references to the magical use of the name are specially common in the Apocalypse. We hear of a white stone on which a new *name* was written which no one knoweth but he that receiveth it<sup>3</sup>. This stone, the prize of Christian endurance, reminds us of the tablets on which powerful names were inscribed in antiquity. Of the same champions of the faith we also read as follows<sup>4</sup>: "I will write upon him the *name* of my God and the *name* of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem . . . and mine own new *name*." So later on we hear of the 144,000 having the *name* of the Lamb and the *name* of his Father written on their foreheads<sup>5</sup>. So the Hindoos paint each the sign of his particular caste on the forehead; and the old Armenian

<sup>1</sup> Eph. i. 21 and Phil. ii. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxiv. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Rev. ii. 17.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. iii. 12.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. xiv. 1; xxii. 4.

word for fate or horoscope means simply "what is written on the forehead." The same idea was at work in baptism and led to the setting of the cross on the catechumen's forehead, in addition to immersion in a holy stream. The *names* of blasphemy which the seven-headed apocalyptic beast bore on his heads were the names of heathen gods<sup>1</sup>. And the Word of God had a *name* written on his head which no one knoweth but himself<sup>2</sup>. The object of writing the most powerful of all names or of impressing the cross—the trade-mark of that name and power—on the forehead was this, that being so conspicuous it might frighten off the demons and hinder their very approach.

To sum up. Jesus, the Messiah, in enjoining the use of his name, and his followers in using it, moved in a circle of ideas as old as the oldest written records we have of our race, namely the cuneiform tablets of ancient Assyria. Yet, as we find among primitive races all over the globe the same superstition about names, we need not necessarily suppose that the Greeks and Jews of the first and succeeding centuries derived the belief from ancient Babylon; though they probably did so, since the Chaldaean were regarded all round the Mediterranean as born magicians. No fact is better calculated to impress on our minds the continuity of religious traditions and practices than this, that in adding to our prayers the phrase "in or by the *name* of Jesus Christ our Lord," we repeat a theurgic formula, and adhere to a magic ritual, which were in vogue in Babylon some six thousand years ago. I do not mean, of course, that the God invoked by us is the same as was theirs—though I should be glad to think so; but the mode of invocation or the method of compelling an answer to our prayers is the same.

2. And perhaps in our investigations we have hit upon the origin of creeds. Why did the Church invent these compendious statements of the chief events in the history of

<sup>1</sup> Rev. xiii. 1; xvii. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. xix. 12.

Jesus the Messiah? In the earliest age a creed could hardly have been used,—as it came to be used in the fourth century,—to winnow away the chaff of heresy from the wheat of true believers.

The preaching of the various apostles must have been something more extended and less jejune than these condensations of the Messiah's history. Judging from the Acts and from Paul's letters, and equally from the Didachê, any statement of doctrine meant for the *instruction* of believers would have included some moral precepts. I believe, therefore, that one reason at least for the formation of the earliest creeds was the want of a short and effective formula for the exorcism of demons. Jesus had indeed enjoined the mere use of his name; but his followers soon found that this was not enough; and so Origen<sup>1</sup> informs us that to the name was added the ἀπαγγελία τῶν περὶ αὐτὸν ἱστοριῶν, i.e. an announcement of the history of Jesus, which was all the more effective if the exorcist who sang out (κατεπαδόντων τοὺς δαίμονας) the demons honestly, believed it. Such an ἀπαγγελία would be the appropriate string of words (συμφυοῦς εἰρμοῦ) which, he elsewhere informs us<sup>2</sup>, must follow a name in exorcisms. It is not clear, however, that a passage from the gospels was not also read or recited; for a "reporting of the history of Jesus" may mean that; as may the phrase "teaching from the holy scriptures" (τὰ ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερῶν γραμμάτων μαθήματα) which he uses elsewhere<sup>3</sup>. Anyhow, he plainly hints at a form of creed similar to the so-called Apostles' Creed when he says<sup>4</sup> that his contemporaries cast out demons by simply calling over the sufferers the name of Almighty God and the name of Jesus along with his history. My theory is confirmed by the fact already observed that probably Peter used such an epitome of Jesus' history in healing the lame man; while almost the earliest form of creed known—I allude to the one in Justin Martyr—is clearly part of an exorcism.

<sup>1</sup> Origen, *C. Cels.* i. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* i. 24.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* vii. 67.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* iii. 24.

In the *Apology of Aristides*<sup>1</sup> there also occurs an early form of creed, as Mr. Rendel Harris has observed, not very unlike the Apostles' Creed; and it is remarkable that Aristides, as translated by him, says of it: "This is *taught from* that Gospel which a little while ago was spoken among them as being preached." The phrase of Origen, ἀπὸ τῶν ἱερῶν γραμμάτων μαθήματα, i.e. *teachings from* the scriptures, practically translates the Syriac phrase in Aristides; and we may conclude that such was the early name by which a creed was designated; the more so as Origen insists on the need of the exorcist *believing* the history which he recited to the demons. When Aristides in the same context dwells upon the *power* inherent in his summary of Christ's history and exhorts the Roman emperor to read the Gospel in order to comprehend that power, we seem to have a reference to the effectiveness of that creed, as a weapon against the powers of evil who must be put to flight before the Holy Spirit can enter and dwell in the souls of men.

But surely some one may ask, Were there not other ends Baptismal in view of which the earliest creeds are more use of creed. likely to have been drawn up? Were they not rather meant to be recited by converts at baptism?

It is certainly true that Irenaeus<sup>2</sup> declares the creed to be a canon of truth accepted by every one at baptism, which the entire Church had by tradition received from the Apostles. Origen<sup>3</sup> equally speaks of the "ecclesiastica praedicatio per successionis ordinem ab apostolis tradita." And there can be no question of the connexion from a very remote epoch of the creed with baptism, which was indeed the only ceremony at which in the earliest ages a creed was formally recited.

This much is clear, that the Apostles' Creed so called is an expansion of the simple formula: "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost," into which, according to

<sup>1</sup> *Apol. Aristid.*, ed. Harris, § ii.

<sup>2</sup> Iren. I, i. 20.

<sup>3</sup> Origen, *Prooem. de Princ.*, 23.

Matthew<sup>1</sup>, the disciples were bidden by Jesus to baptize all nations. And though in other parts of the New Testament we hear of baptism in the name of Jesus Christ alone, there can be no doubt as to the antiquity of the triple formula, since all churches however scattered have everywhere used it in baptism. The only question at issue is this. Was the formula enjoined in Matthew (or the simpler one referred to) expanded, as we already find it to be in Justin and in Aristides, in order to provide converts with a summary of their new faith to be repeated on the occasion of baptism; or, on the other hand, in order to furnish the demons with more explicit information about the higher power in whose name they were commanded to go forth? Of course both these necessities at once may have worked to expand the brief formula into one more comprehensive. But we must bear in mind that the rite of baptism was preceded from a very early epoch by an exorcism of the evil spirits which in the imagination of the very earliest Christians filled the air, and in particular beset the body of one who had been an idolater. The formula used in this exorcism, which prepared the way for the reception, through the water, of the Holy Spirit, was probably such an one as Justin has handed down to us, in which the demon is adjured to depart "in the name of the Son of God and first-born of every creature, who was born of the Virgin and became man, capable of suffering, was crucified under Pontius Pilate by your (i. e. by the Jewish) people, and died and rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven." This formula contains, it is true, allusion to the Virgin as well as an anti-Docetic clause, "capable of suffering" (*παθητοῦ*), which is only appropriate to a period beginning about A.D. 80, and cannot be much older than that. So the baptismal canon of faith put forward as Apostolic and universal by Irenaeus<sup>2</sup> has an anti-Valentinian ring, as Harvey well shows. For the rest, however,

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xxviii. 19.

<sup>2</sup> See *Irenaeus*, ed. Harvey, vol. I, p. 90, n. 1.



and excepting the reference to the Virgin birth, Justin's formula of exorcism is very similar to that used by Peter, as we can infer the latter from Acts iv. 10. With the creed of Aristides it is nearly identical. I should infer, therefore, that the expanded formula, or recitation of the redeeming acts of the Lord, "was first used in the exorcisms which delivered the Christian out of the power of darkness, and were so preliminary to the accession of the Holy Spirit and to the translation into the kingdom of the Son of God's love<sup>1</sup>." Having been used by the exorcist they would naturally be also repeated by the convert who was being baptized. And his formal recital of them as a profession of faith would be the natural complement to the exorcist's previous use of them, and would materially hasten the exit of the demons out of himself.

But whichever way we decide, it is most significant of the great importance attached to the expulsion of demons in the primitive church, that the very earliest creedlike formulæ occur in connexion with cures and exorcisms. This much is certain. And as it is so probable that creeds were in the first instance drawn up less for the instruction of men than of demons, we ought, I think, to be doubly charitable to those who differ from ourselves on such points.

3. A third point which is suggested by the facts we have reviewed is this. The New Testament, especially Dualism in the N. T. the writings of John and Paul, are often very dualistic in tone and tendency, much more so indeed than those of Philo, whom it is the fashion to set down as an oriental dualist. John regards this world as altogether given up to Satan; and Jesus Christ is not of this world at all, no more is his kingdom. "The world knew him not." Equally to Paul is Satan the ruler of this world; and in his belief the atmosphere and heaven are alive with evil spirits. Justin Martyr (*Dial.* ch. 105) declares, and rightly, that the whole purport of Christ's last prayer on the cross

<sup>1</sup> *Dict. of Bible*, art. Exorcism; Col. i. 13.

(Luke xxiii. 46), "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit," after which he yielded up his ghost, was that the shameless and wicked demons who haunt the atmosphere and are always on the watch to grab a dying man's soul, might be baffled by the Father's receiving it direct into his own hands. How different this from Philo who discarded

the belief in evil spirits as superstitious, and only allowed the existence of destroying angels in the sense of ministers of God's just wrath;—  
more marked than in Philo and the Talmud.  
 and for whom also the august gods of Greece, far from being base demons, were identical with the stars of heaven, immortal and holy natures! The oldest Talmud also, though it often mentions evil spirits and exorcism of them by means of the tetragrammaton, is yet less dualistic than the New Testament, for it does not contemplate a rival kingdom of evil, really antagonistic to the divine creator. Therefore it is that we so rarely find in it the titles so common in the New Testament of Satan, Beliar, Beelzebul, Devil, Adversary; or such a phrase as the kingdom of Satan. No doubt the authors of the earliest Talmud wished to avoid any violation of the monotheistic idea, and therefore banished such phrases.

The New Testament is often dualistic with the dualism of the Persians; and, in reading it, one can easily comprehend how and why the heresy of Marcion should have arisen. There is not a little in the fourth Gospel and in Paul's epistles upon which Marcion and the Manichees could base their peculiar teaching, which was but a slight accentuation in other respects also of Paul's beliefs. And this teaching also agrees with the rôle assigned to Jesus as the Messiah by his followers and probably claimed by himself. He was the victor of demons, the rescuer of man from the clutches of Satan. It was not the visible legions of Rome that he was to break and subdue, but the invisible legions of Satan by whom mankind was oppressed. There seems to have been a Persian element in the mind of Jesus alien to true Judaism.

4. And fourthly, we may notice once more how similar in their modes of operation the evil spirit and the good spirit were supposed to be. Inspiration was no other than possession by a good spirit.

Good and evil spirits of similar composition. We see this brought out in the Latin ritual of baptism, in which the priest breathes three times in the child's face, saying: "Come out of this child, thou evil spirit, and make room for the Holy Ghost<sup>1</sup>." For as we saw in reading the Shepherd—a very primitive monument of the Roman Church—the Holy Spirit requires plenty of room, being light and ethereal, and is strangled and suffocated by the presence along with itself in the same vessel of evil spirits which are crass and heavy.

The truth is that the Apostles had the same conception of spirit which held its own even in philosophy until the age of Descartes and is still entertained by the vulgar. They regarded a spirit as a form of wind; for wind moves and shakes objects; yet to the unscientific mind it is without weight even as it is invisible. The demons lived in the air and were made of air, and were like the air immaterial (*ἀσώματοι*), and as a rule invisible. The better spirits, however, and in particular the Holy Spirit, were emanations of the

Evil spirits made of heavy air. Holy Spirit of fiery ether. divine and subtle ether which surrounds the entire world and of which the stars are made. This ether was fiery in texture and rational; and the human reason, the only purely divine element in man, was, according to Philo, an *ἀπαύγασμα* or off-raying thereof. This is why the angels had bodies of fire, as Aristides<sup>2</sup> is careful to inform us.

<sup>1</sup> Lenormant (*Hist. Anc.*, livre VI, p. 200) cites an ancient Assyrian formula similar to the above. It is this: "Let the evil demons depart. Let them fall on one another. But let the propitious demon and the propitious colossus penetrate and enter his body." This, remarks Lenormant, was the best security against the return of the evil spirits, and is to be likened to the divine grace or odour of sanctity replacing in the convert the state of sin and devotion to the Devil.

<sup>2</sup> Aristid. *Apol.* § 2.

The description of the descent of the Holy Spirit in Acts<sup>1</sup> well exemplifies the philosophical categories of that age. It came down from heaven, Pentecostal descent of the Holy Spirit. which was a tract of ether spread out above the grosser atmosphere, the earth being of course regarded as fixed and flat. It made a noise as of the rushing of a mighty wind, for though more subtle than the vaporous air along the earth's surface, it was still gaseous and was to the earthly spirits somewhat as hydrogen is to carbonic acid gas. Being of this character it could fill all the house where the faithful sat, just as air rushes in at an open door or window. "And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder like as of fire, and it sat upon each one of them." For being fiery in nature the Holy Spirit would project itself into tongues of lambent flame shooting here and there. It is noteworthy that exactly similar portents are related in the *Aeneid* in connexion with the young Iulus. In the very primitive Syriac text of the Acts which Ephrem Syrus used in writing his commentary, the Holy Spirit filled the upper chamber on the day of Pentecost not only with a bright light but with a *sweet smell*. For in that age you could recognize a god's presence by the fragrant smell and odour of sanctity which attended it. As says Ovid: "mansit odor; posses scire fuisse deam."

In the Hebrew Gospel also the Holy Spirit's descent on Jesus at the Jordan was attended by a flame-like appearance shining over the waters, and it was with the Spirit and *with fire* that Jesus promised to baptize the faithful. I have already noticed how Jesus, like the Egyptian wise men whom Celsus saw, or like Lucian's Chaldaean, blew upon his disciples; so communicating to them through his breath the Holy Spirit and no doubt dissipating and driving out the crasser spirits, as we can see done to this day at a Roman Catholic baptism. At the baptism of

<sup>1</sup> Acts ii. 2-4.

Jesus the Holy Spirit even materialized itself as a dove and entered—according to the oldest account—*into* Jesus, just as the evil spirit entered *into* a man's body.

I need not dwell further on the uniform and mechanical way in which all spirits, good or bad alike, acted. In that age popular thought had not yet risen to a truer conception of spirit as a simply conscious agency, which is where it acts instead of acting only where it is, and which only being what it does, has no need of a substrate of more or less attenuated or fiery vapour to serve as its substance and as the vehicle of its expression.

This mechanical and materialistic conception of spirit and of spiritual operations also determined the earliest ideas of the Incarnation, and was at the bottom of a great deal of early Docetism. The divine Logos, for example, according to Irenaeus and the earliest fathers, simply thrust out, annihilated and took the place of the human soul in Jesus ; just as the Holy Spirit displaced the human understanding in those who talked with tongues, or as a demon took possession of a man, body and soul. In Docetism the idea was carried further, and Jesus had an ethereal body, such as had, according to Philo<sup>1</sup>, the angels that visited Abraham, on which occasion, as he carefully explains, they ate and drank in appearance only.

5. Prof. Tylor in his work on primitive culture describes how in India a Brahman may be seen sitting by the roadside putting the god into the little hollow images of clay brought to him by the faithful. I have seen it done myself. Now the belief, universal in the Fathers of the Church, that the evil demons had been induced by certain incantations and magic rites to enter and abide in statues and fanes, belongs to exactly the same stage of culture. And so also does the belief that by certain theurgic rites a Christian priest

Bearing of  
these ideas  
on doctrine  
of the Incar-  
nation.

Transference  
of spirits into  
material  
objects.

<sup>1</sup> Philo, *Vita Abrahami*.

can induct the Spirit of God or of Christ into water or into a new-born child or into bread and wine<sup>1</sup>, or into oil, or into a cross or crucifix, or picture, or into a church or shrine, or burial-ground<sup>2</sup>. All these ritual practices, which we may witness to-day in one church or another, originated in an age which believed that the god can be compelled to enter this or that material object by use of his name along with appropriate formulae. In this connexion I have already pointed out that the phrase "laying of a ghost," ἀνάκλισις δαιμόνων, occurs in Origen, who thoroughly believed in the reality of the process of getting a spirit or demon to enter anything or any one.

6. It is a fact too much ignored about the early Christian church that its teachers one and all, with the exception of Jesus and the evangelists, who do not allude to it, believed in the supernatural powers and reality of the old heathen deities. They were all evil spirits; and this belief is the nerve of the resolute refusal of the early Christians to sacrifice even to the *genius* of the emperor. For they believed the genius to be a demon. That we have in the Gospels little or no declamation against the ancient gods and idols, no propaganda of monotheism, is a proof that Jesus addressed himself to Jews alone, who were in no want of such teaching. Accordingly we first meet with it in Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles.

7. A difference of attitude in regard to demons is to be

<sup>1</sup> E. g. in the Liturgy of S. James (Brightman, *Liturgies*, p. 54) the priest prays the Father "to send down his all-holy spirit, that it may approach and with its holy, good and glorious presence sanctify the bread and make it the holy body of Christ." A similar formula comes in most liturgies of the Mass.

<sup>2</sup> Cp. *Exc. ex Theodot.* 82: "And the head and the oil is hallowed by the power of the name, being the same so far as mere appearance goes as they were when laid hold of, but by power they have been changed into a spiritual power. So also the water in being exorcized, and the baptism in its process not only thrusts out the worse agency, but also acquires in addition the holiness."

traced among the four evangelists. John is silent about possession by demons and does not appear to have ascribed diseases to their agency. In this respect, as in others, he approximates to the mental attitude of a cultivated Alexandrine Jew, such as was Philo. The fourth Gospel is indeed a link between the Synoptists and the cultured Judaism of Egypt. In Luke there is a greater tendency to attribute even simple diseases of the body to demoniac possession than there is in Matthew and Mark, who tend to identify possession with lunacy and madness alone. This tendency of Luke is compatible with his being a physician, for the therapy of the age was exorcismal. It may be remarked that in Lucian's *Philopseustes*, Antigonus the physician excels all the other interlocutors in superstition.

Freedom of  
John from  
belief in  
demons.

8. And now in the course of our inquiry we have incidentally answered, many times over, the question we propounded almost at the outset, as to whether the demonology inside the New Testament is of a piece with demonology outside it.

N. T. de-  
mons the  
same with  
those of  
every age.

The answer is yes, no other is possible. Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, The Shepherd of Hermas, Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Origen, all testify that the demons which they saw expelled were of the same kind as those which Jesus cast out. It is in defiance of all reason and logic that most Protestants of to-day accept the demon stories of the New Testament and reject those of the second and succeeding centuries. If we allow one, we must allow the other. In the whole range of patristic literature, going back to a time long anterior to the fixing of the New Testament canon, there is never breathed by any writer the least doubt that the demons of the New Testament were real and active in any sense in which the demons of the subsequent age were not. The view which Dean Farrar is ready to accept, that they were specially created in the life-time of Jesus in order that he might have them to turn out, is therefore the most extraordinary of mental

contortions; and to argue about such a view is, as Prof. Tylor well remarks (in his article on Demonology in the last edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*), too much like arguing whether the world was not flat during the ages in which men believed it to be flat and only became round afterwards, when they abandoned that belief.

Nor is it only the case that the demons of the New Testament are identical with those of Justin, and those of Justin with those of Irenaeus and Origen, and theirs again the same with those of later ages; but all the church writers in turn, as we have seen, attest that the demons exorcized inside the church were the same as those exorcized out of it. None of them raise a doubt as to the reality of the demons expelled by heathen exorcists. Where Christianity had an advantage over other religions was in this, that demons who fled from no other name, yet trembled at that of Jesus Christ. In particular the New Testament and the fathers attest that the Jewish exorcists expelled real demons before, during, and after the lifetime of Jesus.

9. It was one of the chief tasks of Jesus as Messiah to rescue the world from Satan and his angels. That he was at once obeyed by the demons was a prime test and proof of his being the predicted Messiah. There is a curious irony in the history of our religion. The evil demons have been all expelled. They have no longer the engrossing interest for divines which they had for nearly eighteen centuries. It is the folk-lorist or anthropologist, if it is not the policeman or physician, anyhow not the bishop of the diocese or one of his deacons, who nowadays hurries to the remote village where old beliefs linger on and where some one is reputed to have a demon or to be a witch. It was not ever thus. Whence the change? why no demons any more? I should answer that it is free inquiry, a scientific attitude, modern science and modern scepticism, which during the last 150 years

Decay in this  
age of belief  
in demons

due to Ra-  
tionalism  
and not to  
Christianity.



have rid the civilized world of a burthen which dogmatic theology and Christian rites, and even the New Testament itself, had done nothing to alleviate and much to aggravate during seventeen centuries of undisputed sway. For from the earliest ages the superstitious way of regarding the New Testament as a book not to be impugned must have checked the growth of a more intelligent and humane treatment of lunatics. Origen testified to the antagonism which there was in his time between what we nowadays should call the superstitious and the scientific views; and unhesitatingly ranged himself on the side of superstition: "Let the physicians then," he writes, "give their physiological explanations, since they hold in this connexion that an unclean spirit does not even exist, and that madness is no more than a bodily accident (*σωματικὸν σύμπτωμα*). . . . But we believe in the Gospel and declare that this disease (i.e. *σεληνιασμός* or lunacy and epilepsy) is due to the working of an unclean spirit, dumb and deaf in the persons suffering from it; and we see that those who are accustomed, like the charmers (*ἐπαοιδοῖς*) of the Egyptians, to profess a power of healing in such cases, do actually seem sometimes to succeed in curing them" (*Comm. in Matt.* xiii. 6). Here we see that Origen appeals to the Gospel against the heresies of the "physiologist"; and it is heart-breaking to think how for nearly 2000 years, in Christian countries, lunatics have been, on the authority of the Gospel, alternately flogged and exorcized. Such are the evils which may attend blind reverence for a sacred book. "Saevis sic nos replevit umbr s<sup>1</sup>."

The task then of Jesus the Messiah and of his disciples, so far as it consisted in overthrowing and annihilating the evil demons which oppressed mankind, has been fulfilled, but not by Christian priests and exorcists, nor in the manner contemplated by Jesus Christ.

10. The question of the limitations of Jesus' knowledge

<sup>1</sup> Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* xxx. 5.

has been much mooted of late. It shows how timorous and halting any re-examination of main premises must ever be in a religious body organized like our Anglican Church, that the most distinguished advocate of the view that Jesus' knowledge was limited shrinks from adducing his demonological beliefs as a proof of such limitation and weakly tries to make out a case for their validity.

The gospels, through which we look back on Jesus, are media of very different refracting powers, and it is impossible to decide whether Matthew and Mark rationalized or whether Luke was simply superstitious. According as we take one or the other view, we must or must not attribute to Jesus himself the belief that tempests and fevers were demons, and that rheumatism, madness, deafness, and dumbness and all other physical weaknesses were due to demoniacal possession. I myself am convinced that he did so regard them. Anyhow he regarded madness as such. Indeed if we are to credit the gospels at all, we must believe that he was thoroughly immersed in all the popular superstitions of his age concerning evil spirits.

Yet where others used names and spells, he cast out devils with a word. I think his voice and glance must have been fraught with a mesmeric influence.

Any one who has conversed with one demented, must have felt that reason is in him let and hindered by some cruel flaw in its natural vehicle of expression ; yet that it is there, if only one can penetrate behind the barrier that hems it in. In a high, perhaps in an unexampled degree, the manner, the presence, the voice of Jesus must have had this penetrative influence. To the same magic of word and look he must have owed his ascendancy over his disciples. It would seem as if with many he had but to say "Follow me," and they followed him. He won almost at sight the lasting devotion of the strongest natures ; and the entire history of the early church is inexplicable, except on the supposition that his was a strength of per-

sonality such as has rarely, if ever, in historical times belonged to any one. Others, like Mahomet and Napoleon, have had a natural gift of inspiring unlimited confidence in themselves; but where is any one who ever used the authority over others so gained to such pure ends as Jesus? who that ever had such a faculty of using men, had he chosen to do so for ends of his own, was yet so wholly without pride or false ambition? who ever availed himself so exclusively of his gifts in order to inculcate humility and goodness, and nothing else among others? We must not then make it a reproach to Jesus that he envisaged the combat with sin and suffering in the only way in which one born and bred in his surroundings could possibly envisage it, namely as a battle with evil spirits. His whole career betokens that, if any clearer view had lain within his reach, he would not have hesitated to embrace it, merely because the other view was conventional or widespread. He was not of that timorous cast of mind which economizes truth and makes believe to itself that it holds a creed out of which the time-spirit has stolen all life and substance. When Jesus saw that anything was a figment he hastened to denounce it as such.

I confess that, if the spectacle of his demonological belief has any lesson for us at all, it is not that

The moral  
for us of his  
ignorance.

we should make vaunt of our superior wisdom. It should rather fill us with a deep humility to reflect that, though he shared with his age certain beliefs which, if held to-day, would be rightly termed superstitious, nevertheless he was, as a moral will and character, so much better than the best of men, that the most progressive races of the globe have rightly recognized in his life an almost unapproachable ideal of love and holiness and self-sacrifice.

*(Concluded.)*

F. C. CONYBEARE.